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A

JOURNEY

FROM

LA TRAPPE TO ROME:

BY THE

REVEREND FATHER,

BARON GERAMB,

ABBOT AND PROCURATOR-GENERAL OF LA TRAPPE.

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TO THE FRENCH CLERGY.

VENERABLE PRIESTS,

I have already dedicated my Pilgrimage to Jerusalem to you : permit me now to introduce my JOURNEY TO ROME to the public under the patronage of your name. Your devoted attachment to the Holy See, and the tender affection of the Sovereign Pontiff for the Clergy of the Church of France, give you a double claim to this new homage of

MARIE JOSEPH DE GERAMB,

Abbot and Procurator-General of La Trappe.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

IN the preface to a work, the author generally proposes to make known himself and his performance. I will not now speak of myself, as I have already done this in my "Pilgrimage to Jerusalem." Those who have read it already know by what means it has pleased God to lead me, the circumstance in which I have written, and the motives I have had in appearing before the public. I have then only to speak of this new work ; but what shall I say of it? Had I undertaken it from a motive of vain glory, I might enumerate the praises so liberally bestowed on my "Pilgrimage;" and as this may be considered its sequel, I might hope to excite the same interest, and endeavour, thereby, to ensure for myself the same success. But, far from me be such pretensions! In my former work, I had two means of interesting my readers. I had to describe places, with which the most sacred recollections will be for ever connected, and had to depict manners, which the hastiness or prejudices of travellers did not always permit them rightly to appreciate or faithfully portray. Thus, while I was able to interest some by the fidelity of my descriptions, I obtained the approbation of those who only seek in the Scripture the secret manna which

it contains, and see in Jerusalem nothing of the mysteries of which it was the theatre. A visit to Rome does not afford the same advantages. For pious readers, Rome is indeed the new Jerusalem: and I am persuaded that such will listen to me with pleasure when I speak of the Sovereign Pontiff; and that they will thank me for having raised my voice against the false imputations which have been devised by hatred, and propagated by indolence and curiosity. But what shall I offer to supply the place of the varied scenes which the manners of the Arabs and the present state of Egypt afforded me? Were I to describe ancient and modern Rome, I might thereby compensate myself, and satisfy the greatest number of my readers, by furnishing a still greater treat to their curiosity. Why then have I not done so? Why have not I embellished this work with detailed descriptions, instead of briefly noticing the magnificent monuments which my subject brought before me? I proceed to give my answer; and this answer will unfold the object I have had in view, in the composition of the present work.

The monuments of no country in the world have been better studied than those of Italy. Thousands of travellers visit it every year; and many, if not most of them, favour us with the relation of their journey. In these tourists we discover men who have made a profound study of the fine arts: no fault, no beauty, escapes their observation; and we know not which most to admire, the variety of their acquirements, or the delicacy of their tastes. But when they come to speak of customs, morals, and religion, they are no longer the same men. To no purpose do they protest against the

imputation of partiality : it appears even in the precautions which they take to guard against it. This cannot excite wonder. Those travellers are, for the most part, Lutherans or Calvinists, who have been brought up in ignorance and hate of our holy religion ; they look on Rome as a new Babylon, and accumulate on its Pontiffs insults which their better judgment must condemn.

Profoundly afflicted at the outrages offered to Jesus Christ, in the person of his Vicar, I have proposed to embody in these letters some observations on the court of Rome, the spirit of the church, and the character of the Italians. I will say nothing that I have not myself witnessed ; nothing which I am not able to maintain by proof. I will esteem myself fortunate if, without departing from that style which charity always employs, I succeed in eradicating some prejudices, correcting some errors, and establishing some truths.

GERAMB, *Abbot.*

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

MOTIVES similar to those which influenced the author in the composition of the following work, have induced the translator to present it to the public. He has taken the liberty of adding a few notes, almost entirely extracted from modern publications of merit on the same subject, with the view of illustrating the author's views, and occasionally elucidating points which he but slightly touched upon. The synoptical tables, found at the end of the volume, are also of this description ; and it is hoped that few readers will be displeased at an addition, which affords them minute and authentic details on a subject so little known as are the charitable institutions of Rome. While claiming the reader's indulgence for the many imperfections which he fears will be found in his performance, the translator feels himself bound to acknowledge his obligations to an amiable and gifted friend, for the poetical translations that occasionally relieve the dulness of his own prose.

JOURNEY TO ROME.

LETTER I.

GOD ALONE.

Departure from Lyons—Sickness at Colmar—Arrival at the monastery of Mount Olivet of Our Lady of La Trappe—Reflections—The prior and his brother—Their death—Fire at Mount Olivet—Trial of the incendiary—The influenza—Death of two monks.

*Mont des Olives de Notre Dame de la Trappe,
April 3d, 1837.*

WHEN I returned, dear Charles, from my pilgrimage to Jerusalem, I was induced to publish an account of it, with the hope that it might promote the greater glory of God. Having then no other view than to return to the solitude I had, for a while, quitted, I determined on leaving Lyons, where I had spent upwards of a year; and, accordingly, directed my steps towards La Trappe. When I arrived in this province, which the Rhine separates from Germany, and which, in the manners and language of its inhabitants, retains the impress of its subjection to a foreign power, I was only a few leagues distant from my monastery. Already did I begin to congratulate myself on reaching the object of my desires, when I perceived myself somewhat indisposed. Still I continued my journey; but on coming to Colmar, I became seriously

ill. God, whose justice exposed me to this trial, had, however, in his mercy, provided for me abundant consolation and support. In the worthy pastor of the place, I discovered an old friend. He received me with generous hospitality, and my pains were alleviated by the kindness and attention which he ceased not to exhibit to me. His assistant clergymen manifested the same spirit, and seemed to rival him in zeal. Such is the priest of Jesus Christ; his charity extends to all, and on all the wounds of humanity he is ever ready to pour a soothing and salutary unction.

As soon as I thought myself able to continue my journey, I did so, despite the remonstrances of my physician and the pressing solicitations of my hosts. I soon repented of this precipitation, for, on coming to Cernay, I was obliged to have recourse to the physician of the place. The remedy he applied was successful; and on the same day, the 15th of September, I reached, with some difficulty, Mount Olivet.

How sweet it is, on returning from a long pilgrimage, after so many incidents and dangers, to find one's-self again in the calm, the silence, and even the monotony of La Trappe! I need not describe what I felt when, from Reiningen, I discovered the walls of this holy monastery, where I had suffered so much, and had been so happy. Shall I meet with all the religious that I left there? Do those venerable men yet live—those angels, those models of perfection, who, even in their austerities, seem to regain their pristine vigour? While putting this question to myself, I passed by the cemetery; for our fathers had placed it at the entrance of the convent, that the image of death might conduct us to penance, and enable us to undergo its rigors. I cast my eyes on the spot where, one day, I am to repose. In more than one place the earth had been recently disturbed. How many of my

brethren have been laid there since my departure ? This agitation increases when I find myself before the couch, whereon I repose only for a few hours, even in the longest nights, and on which, however, I seek for sleep, which refuses itself to my wearied eyelids—when I take my place in the common refectory to partake of some vegetables only, seasoned with a little salt, and eat of bread which we bake but once in ten days. All this is very hard, you will tell me, and ought to cost nature much. My dear Charles, this is the language of the world : but the world, which censures the austerities of the religious life, knows not the sweetness by which they are accompanied. How my heart beat—what was the impression I experienced when, in the middle of the first night, the bell called me to prayer ! The darkness of the cloister, illumined by the pale glimmer of a lamp—the heavy and measured steps of the religious, who advanced towards the church—the slow and profound salutations at the entrance of the sanctuary—those vaults which resound with the singing of the inspired canticles, and the sighs which interrupt the words of the royal penitent—all this penetrated my soul, and inundated it with a delight I had not enjoyed for a long time. If grace, which, doubtless, in this moment, spoke to my heart, does not always produce so powerful an effect, I must not, therefore, forget that I am a soldier of Jesus Christ, and that heaven suffers violence. Permit me here to record the reflection which was made on this subject by another Trappist, who had, like me, served his prince and his country in the rude profession of arms, and ended his days in a monastery of Spain : “ When I think,” says he, “ of the enterprises of the conquerors of America, of their passages from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, through the Isthmus of Panama, and of what they must have suffered in making their way, through trees and shrubs which had

intertwined since the creation—of what they must have endured in those desert vallies, under the excessive heat of an equatorial sun—and their sudden transition to the snow-covered mountains by which they were inclosed, and all this merely for the purpose of acquiring the treasures of the Indians—when I remember that all these efforts were for the sake of deceitful goods, and consider, on the other hand, that the hope of those who labour for God will not be disappointed, I am forced to exclaim, ‘alas ! how little we do for heaven !’”

This is true, my dear Charles ; but although I am persuaded of this truth, and am accustomed to make it the subject of my meditation, I still find that human nature is not entirely dead within me, and that it sometimes wishes to dispute the victory with God. Shall I speak to you of the combat I had to sustain, when I was obliged to resume the observances of the convent ? What recollections, what images, what illusions did not then awake ! Grace inclined me to mortification and subjection ; and told me to regard myself as the last of my brethren, to give to God all the glory, and heap up treasure only in heaven, where nothing perishes. Nature, on the other hand, having no other end in view than present gratification, was unwilling to be constrained or humbled—experienced difficulty in submitting to the rule—claimed certain exemptions ; and, reverting to the past, smiled, occasionally, at vain distinctions and transitory goods. Such were the sentiments which then divided my soul. In this perilous moment I besought of God to sustain me by his grace ; for his grace will suffice, even were I to obtain nothing that nature covets.

Scarcely had I arrived at the monastery, when the Prior, accompanied by another religious, came to visit me. They both cast themselves at my feet, which they frequently kissed. “ We kiss,” said the holy Prior, as he

rose, and made a profound inclination before me, "we kiss the feet which have so lately traversed the land in which the Saviour of the world, the only begotten Son of God, dwelt for thirty-three years, and which he bedewed with his blood." This act of humility affected, although it did not surprise me; for the Prior was one of the most venerable men I had ever seen. Alas, we were soon to lose him! Full of days and of merits, he went, some months afterwards, to partake of the glory of the saints, whose example he had imitated on earth.

This good father spent forty years in La Trappe: he had had a brother, who was a religious of the same monastery. They were twins; they came into the world together, and they never separated. They had been nourished with the same milk, they were taught by the same preceptors, and they imbibed the same principles. Education, perfecting the work of nature, had developed in them the same inclinations. Obedient to the same inspiration, they had entered La Trappe at the same time; had pronounced their solemn vows on the same day, and before the same altar, one beside the other; and for more than thirty years, the choir never resounded with the chaunting of the religious, without bearing to the foot of heaven's throne their united accents. Death alone was able to separate them. Father Charles, brother of the Prior, was the first victim; and the Prior, in the absence of the Abbot, interred him. With what resignation did he render dust to dust!—with what emotion did he pronounce the accustomed prayers! Some tears, indeed, fell from his eyes, when the remains of one he so tenderly loved disappeared under the earth, which the religious shovelled on them; but through those tears glistened the smile of hope.

This good father, as prior, had the permission to

converse occasionally with me. His greatest pleasure was to speak on death. His words penetrated my soul, for death, which, even for the most just, is always accompanied with something that affrights, was, however, for him nothing more than the end of his earthly course. He expected it, he desired it; and this desire, animating all his actions, made him experience delight in his privations and joy in his sufferings. During his illness, he manifested an heroic patience; and when his last hour approached, he received extreme unction, asked pardon for the bad example he might have given, and expressed his wish to die on the floor strewn with ashes. There, tranquilly looking on death with the same eye that he had ever regarded it, and dying to himself, as he had been daily accustomed to do, he closed his eyes with holy joy, and gave back his soul to God, surrounded by the community on bended knees, who hesitated whether to pray for him, or invoke his memory.

Some time before, a distressing event spread terror in the two monasteries of Mount Olivet. I say the two houses, for not far from our house is another, belonging to nuns of the same order. On Sunday, the 13th of November, while both communities were singing vespers in their respective churches, a violent fire broke out in the convent. We ran to the scene of conflagration, but notwithstanding our efforts—notwithstanding the exertions of the inhabitants of Reiningen and the environs, who flew to our relief, in the space of two hours the destructive element consumed the barn, the harvest which had been gathered in it, and the stables. The flames, rising to the clouds, spread dismay far around, and, aided by the wind, enveloped the two monasteries, and menaced them with destruction. Judge what must have been the situation of the nuns. The

confused voices of those who gave the aid of their assistance—the tolling of the bell—the action of the engines—the hissing of the water which overwhelmed the flames—the crash of the burning beams which fell—the falling of the walls—in a word, the tumult inseparable from such circumstances, filled with terror those spouses of Jesus Christ—those timid doves, habituated to the silence of the sanctuary, which is rarely disturbed by any other sound than that of the aspirations, which hourly ascend from their innocent hearts. There was but one gate by which they could escape; it was the principal entrance, a door which was only opened to receive those who came to dedicate themselves to penance or to admit the minister of God when he came to administer the last sacraments to the dying, or commit their remains to the earth. The flames however precluded approach to this gate; and there was reason to apprehend that the progress of the destructive element would prove fatal to these poor creatures, many of whom, being old and sickly, could only employ sighs and prayers for their delivery. These prayers were heard; the wind lost its strength, the fire its activity—the conflagration was gradually subdued, and finally extinguished. One choir-sister, however, soon after fell a victim to the consequences of its destructive influence.

Meanwhile, some of the peasants, who had come to our relief, perceived a young man flying through the fields, from the scene of destruction. They arrested and questioned him. He replied that he came from La Trappe, that he had passed there some hours, and that the fear of the fire had forced him to flee from it. When on the point of being liberated, other peasants came up, who conceived it proper that he should be brought before the magistrate of the district. This functionary found nothing in his case that could war-

rant his detention ; still he thought that too much care could not be employed in the investigation of an accident, of which the cause was unknown. By a just judgment of God, he began to perceive some trouble in the countenance of the accused, and ordered, as a measure of precaution, until further information, that he should be imprisoned in Alkirch. Alas ! this young man had set fire to the convent !

He was born of Christian parents, and brought up in sentiments of piety. Wishing to become a Trappist monk, he had sought admission into our house, and had actually passed eight months in the noviceship, from which he was dismissed, as he not had manifested the necessary qualifications for a religious life. Could we have thought that pride would have hurried him to the commission of so great a crime, did we not know that this vice has, on more than one occasion, concealed itself under the cloak of religion, and that it has enkindled flames which yet endure, and which, probably, never will be extinguished ?

Judicial inquiries were made into the causes of this serious conflagration, and the Abbot was cited before the Assize Court of Colmar. He went there, accompanied by two monks. On his return he brought with him that singular malady, called the influenza,* which then ravaged Alsace. In the space of three days, thirty of the community were attacked with it. Two of them died, one on entering the infirmary ; the other, who had charge of the clothes, while in the church in the act of supplicating God.

Adieu, my dear Charles, I renew the assurance of the tender and inviolable sentiments, which you know I have so long felt for you, and which attach my soul to yours.

* La grippe.

LETTER II.

Sickness and sufferings—Leaves the monastery for Rome—Passes through Switzerland—Convalescence—Our Lady of Hermits, pilgrimage—Reflections on Switzerland—Letter to M. de la Mennais—Arrival at Paris.

Paris, 17th of July, 1837.

I HAVE been suffering all the year, my dear Charles : to my ordinary distempers was united the present general malady.* Since my detention in the Tower of Vincennes, where I only heard the unbolting of doors and the steps of jailors, I am easily affected by the least sound, and I have found myself unequal to the austerities of La Trappe. By a particular disposition of Providence, who, doubtless, wished to increase my difficulties and my merits, the cell which I occupied in the intervals between the various duties of the house, was exposed to all the noise that was heard in the community. At my right, was the brother-shoemaker, whose hammer seemed his most favourite tool ; on my left, the carpenter's saw was always in operation ; and above me was the Abbot's cell, which seemed never vacant. Add to this two mastiff dogs, who never ceased to bark, and you will have an idea of my situation and sufferings. Do not, however, be scandalized. I do not complain. I only ask of God to give me patience, as I know that these light and transient inconveniences may obtain for me a great degree of glory.

On returning from my long pilgrimage, I proposed to go to Rome, to pray at the tomb of St. Peter, and kiss the feet of his successor. Many circumstances hitherto prevented me. The sovereign pontiff being informed of my design, condescended to extend to me his pastoral

* The Influenza.

solicitude, and permitted me to visit Rome. I have again left my monastery, and directed my steps to Switzerland, where some affairs called me. I was so reduced at the time of my departure, that those who had not seen me for a year, could scarcely recognise me; but when I arrived in that country, when I had inhaled the perfume of the salubrious herbage, with which it abounds, I began to revive. My health was soon re-established. I contented myself at first with a walk in the verdant valleys, where the shepherds and their flocks afforded me matter for amusement and reflection; but soon, becoming more invigorated, I passed lakes, climbed up mountains, traversed different localities, and approached the elevated cascade, the snow-capped rock, and the eternal glacier.

I was particularly gratified in visiting the celebrated chapel of our Lady of Hermits, where multitudes of Christians from different quarters succeed each other uninterruptedly, and press round the altar of the Madonna.

For all that seek her holy shrine,
The weak of frame, the sad of heart,
She hath a solace; none depart
Unsoothed, uncheered; a smile divine
For ever seems to tell the band
Of pilgrims meek, who round her stand,
How prompt her will to succour all
Who on her name in sorrow call.

Ah! think how few beneath the sun,
Need no repose from grief or care—
No resting-time, to breath a prayer
For days mispent, or victories won.
How many tears in silence shed
Have dewed the sacred ground we tread—
How many hearts, by anguish riven,
Unknown to men, beloved by heaven,
Have bowed them in this holy cell,
Then murmur not, "it is not well."—

From the most distant parts of Alsace and Lorraine, numerous pilgrims arrive each year at our Lady of Hermits. They are, for the most part, poor matrons, or young girls, who come to ask or thank Mary—those for the preservation of a sick child—these for the recovery of an aged parent. They may be seen silently marching in companies, occasionally barefooted, always with the beads in their hands. A piece of brown bread is generally their only food, and the water of the clear fountains, which they meet on their route, suffices to quench their thirst. Follow them to the foot of the altar : who would not be touched by the vivacity of their faith ! who would not desire to partake of their consolations !

All that is bold, grand, and sublime—all that can inspire admiration, fear, and terror—whatever Providence has impressed on his works of the graceful, the sombre, and the touching character—in a word, whatever nature, in its immensity, affords of regular or romantic, smiling or sad, pastoral or terrific scenery, all seem to be united in Switzerland. It is an epitome of the whole earth. With the exception of volcanic and sea-scenery, there is no kind of natural beauty which the eye beholds not in it. Its broad lakes sometimes even present maritime views, especially when slight tempests disturb the usual placid tranquillity of their waters. This made an ingenious observer say that the ocean had sent its miniature portrait to Switzerland.

In Switzerland, more than elsewhere, the Christian traveller should participate in the enthusiasm of Daniel, and sing with him :

“ Works of the Lord, bless the Creator ; praise and exalt him for ever.

“ Ye Heavens, bless the Lord.

“ Ye Stars of Heaven, bless the Lord.

“ Rain and dew, winter and hoar-frosts, snow and ice,

lightnings and clouds, mountains and hills, herbs and plants, which germinate in the earth, springs and fountains, bless ye the Lord, praise and exalt him for ever."

Time, indeed, leaves no impression of its transit on external nature in Switzerland; but the manners of its inhabitants, heretofore so renowned for their sweetness, their fidelity, their attachment to old customs, have felt its touch. Alas! all is changed, even their national costume: that costume which was so becoming, so varied and so picturesque, that strangers never observed it without admiration. Now may be seen young peasant girls, dressed *à la Française*, humming some new air, while they lazily walk behind their hay-carts. But what most afflicted me, and most poignantly wounded my soul, was to see the Catholic religion obstructed in its worship, persecuted in its ministers, and even insulted in the person of the representative of the Head of the Church. I have seen poor Catholics persecuted by the clamours of prejudice, and the invectives of calumny, for no other crime than that of asserting rights which had been legitimately acquired for them, and which ages of possession had guaranteed to them. I have seen the followers of Calvin take possession of ancient monasteries, profane those sacred asylums of piety, seize on their property, and entrust to greedy and ignorant administrators the precious fruits of taste, of labour, and of economy. Finally, I have seen the troops which had been raised for the maintenance of order and the defence of the country, march against the peaceful inhabitants of a city, whose only guilt consisted in attachment to the religion of their fathers, and, regardless of the most solemn treaties, raise against them the swords which ought to have protected them. And all this took place in the nineteenth century—the age of illumination and of progress—upon the classic soil of liberty, in the abused name of liberty

itself, and under the specious pretext of accelerating the happiness of the people, and of conducting them to a new age of imaginary light, but of real barbarism.

On quitting La Trappe, I wrote to Monsieur de la Mennais. My letter, which has been published in almost all the journals, was dictated by the most unaffected charity. Full of admiration for the talent of the man, and of respect for the priest of God, I hoped that, at the invitation of an aged Trappist returning from the Holy Land, he would open his eyes, and, taking the pilgrim's staff, would accompany me to Rome; cast himself at the feet of the vicar of Jesus Christ, and acknowledge that human reason is but darkness when it has no other light than its own glimmerings. How often has not Providence been seen to produce the most astonishing events by weak instruments! It appeared to me, moreover, that the author of the *Essai sur l'Indifférence*—once the eloquent defender of Catholicity—would easily have caught my idea, and would be sufficiently magnanimous to atone for the scandal of his errors, by the *éclat* of his submission, and the sincerity of his repentance. I received no answer to this letter; but I did not, therefore, lose all hope. On my arrival in Paris, my affection for this celebrated writer seemed to acquire a new impulse. I sought after him every where. I inquired of his friends and his enemies. I was anxious to meet him in a retired part of this capital: to follow his steps, to press him to my heart, and drag him to Rome, where fallen greatness finds consolation, and weakness, when acknowledged and repented of, mercy and peace. For a while, I flattered myself that I should find him, at the rendezvous which I had appointed at Marseilles, but soon I learned enough to dissipate my hopes, and make me fear that my most ardent wish would not be gratified. This fear filled me with sadness: entirely taken up with my project, I seemed

sometimes to see him whom I vainly sought, and would, on such occasions, say to him with a young poet:

Oh! shall the living echo of that faith,
Which led our sires to martyrdom and heaven—
The prophet of the age, to whom 'twas giv'n
To rouse a nation from the sleep of death,
Pouring the tones of thy inspired breath
Through Zion's holy trump—by passion driv'n
Shalt thou sow discord in thy father-land?
Sully the glory of thy Christian fame?
Become a rav'ning wolf? And shall thy name,
Thy once proud name, with heresy's dark brand,
Go down to future times? Oh, no—thy soul,
Still warm with fire from heav'n, forbids the fear:
A mortal, thou hast erred: a mortal, hear
The voice of love, that calls thee from the goal,
Where wild ambition lures: and brighter far
Shall seem thy tears than e'en the dazzling star,
That, treacherous, leads thee from the peaceful shore
To wander on the deep—return once more—
Oh! to the altars of thy youth return!
And all that love thy name shall cease to mourn.

Meanwhile I learned, with surprise, that Marseilles was, for the third time, visited by the cholera; that Rome had not been spared, and that this dreadful scourge raged round the capital. It was then necessary that I should decide on remaining some time longer in Paris. I endeavoured to make a solitude for myself in the midst of this great city, and consoled myself with the determination of leaving it as soon as possible. Let no one remind me, either of the monuments which adorn it, or of the sciences and arts which it cultivates. This capital brings back so many sad recollections, especially when our thoughts revert to that sanguinary epoch, in which society believed that it existed, when it had ceased to live.

And, oh ! my friend, is it not from its bosom, as from a poisoned source, that have issued, and still continue to come forth, so many impious books which cover and corrupt the earth ?

As I am obliged by circumstances to prolong my residence in Paris, what better can I do, my dear Charles, than to convey to you the new impressions which it may make upon me. This will be my only occupation, and my only pleasure.

LETTER III.

Vincennes—Recollections—Arrest at Husum, in 1812—Aix-la-Chapelle—Baron Desprès des Coudrais—Admirable trait—Captivity—Change of prison—The Abbe de Boulogne—Bishop of Troyes—Monsignore de Gregorio—Father Fontana—Abbate Pedicini—Entry of the allies into Paris—Delivery.

Paris, 6th of August, 1837.

I HAVE just returned from a visit to the tower of Vincennes, where I had been confined two years.

How many contradictions are there not in this world ! I entered this tower, the first time, against my will ; and on this occasion I was obliged to obtain permission to visit it. I was not aware of this formality, and entrance was accordingly at first refused ; but the following day, having addressed a note to Lieutenant-General Baron de Gourgaud, I obtained the necessary permission.

What recollections did not this place recall to my mind. It was there that St. Louis, seated under the shade of an oak tree, administered justice. It was there that the unfortunate Duke d'Enghien was assassinated

by order of him* whose sword pressed so long and so heavily on Europe. In that tower were confined many great criminals, as also many innocent victims. There I have seen holy bishops and illustrious cardinals expiating in confinement their fidelity to the church of which they were the defenders. But there also, my dear Charles, the voice of God spoke to my heart; it was in that tower of Vincennes, in the days of my captivity, that I recovered true liberty—that of the Christian!

After a short visit to the chapel, and a hasty glance at the arsenal, I advanced to the tower. I will not endeavour to describe my feelings when I passed through this gate which, in 1812, closed on me, without there being any probability that I should ever see it open. When I ascended the stairway—dark, narrow and winding, at the top of which is the chamber which I occupied—if indeed that name be applicable to a small octagonal room ten feet high, having one small window, ornamented, for greater security, with large iron bars, through which I could scarcely see the sky or inhale the fresh air—I fell on my knees at the threshold of the door, and gave thanks to God—not for having restored me to liberty, but for having deprived me of it, for a time, to make me know the vanity of earthly grandeur, and to teach me to serve Him alone.

What moment for me was that, in which I humbled myself under the hand of the Omnipotent—when, renewed by his grace, I placed all my confidence in His mercies? Happy moment! The world with all its pleasures affords nothing of the like to its followers.

It was then that I understood the patience of the martyrs, and the satisfaction which they experienced when, cast into prisons and already covered with wounds, they sang the hymn of victory. In the fervour of my

* Bonaparte.

gratitude, I approached my burning lips to the bars of my prison-window, and to the bolts of the door which separated me from the universe. What light then shone on my countenance! How many doubts were dissipated!—how many truths regained their influence over me!—how many salutary reflections and pious resolutions did I not make! O silence of my prison! O mysterious nights in which I heard nothing but the wind whistling through the battlements, and dying away unheeded like the sighs of the imprisoned! Hours at once sweet and long, in which the injustices of men and the other evils of this life disappeared before the hope of another and better one! No; I have not forgotten you—I never can forget you.

So much was said about the prisoners of Vincennes, at the time they were restored to liberty, that I think myself obliged, at least as far as concerns myself, to rectify some mistakes on the subject. I was arrested on my return from England, in 1812, at Husum, a seaport of Denmark, more than six hundred miles from France. I was brought first to Hamburg, and thence to Paris, and was cast into the dungeon of Vincennes. I will say nothing of the injustice of such an arrest. Being a subject of the Emperor of Austria, and having no relation to France, I have yet to learn what could have justified this manifest violation of the rights of nations. It is true I had always declared myself against Bonaparte; and, when he was approaching Vienna in 1807, I issued a proclamation, in which the youth of the city were called on to fight under the banner of a regiment called, from the late Empress, Maria Theresa. This address was not couched in insulting language—it concluded thus: “To meet the enemy, I tear myself from a beloved wife and six small children; but I was a citizen before I became a husband or a father.”—I had also served against

him in Spain ; in all this I only did my duty. At Hamburg I was deprived of my *valet de chambre*, and escorted afterwards by gens d'armes, at my own expense ! I had two of them in my carriage, and one on the box.

I must not avoid mentioning what happened to me at Aix-la-Chapelle. There is no traveller, who repassing his journey in his mind, and bringing to his recollection the tempests which he endured, but will remember the rays of light, which, for a moment, tempered their horrors.

I was alone in my chamber, when a respectable looking man presented himself to me ; he said that he had learned my name, and that he would deliver me if I wished it. I thanked him, and answered, that such an attempt would involve us both, as it would probably be unsuccessful. Seeing that he could not overcome my unwillingness, he spoke to me in the kindest manner ; and being alarmed at some noise, he precipitately left me, leaving on the table a purse of gold, saying, in a whisper, " A prisoner cannot foresee all the privations to which he will be exposed."—Who is this generous man ? What is his name ? Whence arises the interest he takes in my fate ? Where can I find him ?—I was lost in conjecture.

Three years had passed away, when my brother sent to La Trappe a letter, which had been addressed to him in Hungary. The contents of this letter made him conclude that it was intended for me. It ran thus :

" General—I have learned from the journals your feats of arms during the late campaign, and I felt my heart impel me to communicate to you the joy I have experienced at the circumstance, as it is to me a proof that your captivity has not been long, I reckon among my happy days, that in which I had the honour to make

your acquaintance at Aix-la-Chapelle. I will, however, always regret that you did not accept my offer to assist you in escaping.

“BARON DESPRES DES COUDRAIS,
“Lieutenant Colonel.

“*Castle of Vireux, Department of Ardennes.*”

Thus I at length knew that excellent man, who, without any other motive than a desire to oblige an unfortunate stranger, had acted so heroically. I esteemed myself particularly fortunate in this discovery, as I had obligations to him which I was anxious to discharge. I immediately answered him, and let him know that he had mistaken my brother for me—that I had been a prisoner for two years at Vincennes, and afterwards had retired to La Trappe. This intelligence pleased him; as he was a man of great piety, he could appreciate the wisdom of my conduct. The Baron Desprès des Coudrais is one of the old emigrants. He returned to France in 1805 to discharge the duties of a son towards his aged parents, who resided in a castle, which the revolution had left them.

On returning from Jerusalem, a few days after my arrival at Marseilles, I received a letter from this excellent friend. He had learned from the public journals that I had terminated my pilgrimage, and wrote to compliment me on the occasion. He informed me, at the same time, of the death of his parents, and of his marriage with an English lady. He pressed me to pass some time with him in his castle, an invitation I was however unable to accept of. But it is time to resume the account of my captivity.

I was arrested at the moment when Napoleon had gained the summit of prosperity; when, at the head of the powers which he had attached to his chariot, he was marching against Russia with an innumerable army.

Separated from the world, from that day—seeing no one but my keepers, and, only on Sunday, the commandant of the tower, who came with the surgeon to examine the state of my health—I was in perfect ignorance of every thing outside the walls of my chamber. These official visitors had probably been instructed to preserve the most profound silence with me upon all matters ; they obeyed their instructions wonderfully well. The most ordinary and simple questions were answered by an unconcealed evasion. When walking on the platform of the tower—which occurred only at great intervals of time—I would direct my attention to Paris, which I had not before visited, and ask my jailor the name of any building that attracted my attention—for instance, the dome of the “Invalides,”—he would answer dryly, “I don’t know.” More than this I never heard from him. Disgusted with this eternal “I don’t know,” I resolved not to ask any questions ; but this state is not natural to man. That the monk in his cloister should preserve silence, does not astonish me. It is a part of the sacrifice he has made ; it is an article of the rule which he has voluntarily embraced ; and the graces attached to his state facilitate its observance for him. Those with whom he lives have but one heart, one soul with him. Having broken the bonds which attached him to other men, he has nothing more to hope or fear from them ; and thus tranquil with regard to the present, he is strengthened against the terrors of the future by the exercises he practises and the privations he endures. Should any cloud overcast the serenity of his soul, he can at least communicate his trouble to his superior, in whom he is sure to find a consoler. It is not thus with the state-prisoner. Condemned to absolute silence, separated from all he holds most dear, and seeing nothing but the supercilious countenances of his jailors, he is forced to bury his thoughts

in his breast ; becomes agitated and irritable, and the evils which he fears, affect him more than those which he actually endures. Such was my life during the two years of my captivity. Often, on the decline of day, have I seemed to myself to behold the shade of the Duke d'Enghien, and then I would say, " Perhaps some night they may come to shoot me also." God, however, had other designs upon me, and I was on the eve of my deliverance without expecting it.

The 6th of February I had retired to rest somewhat earlier than ordinary. Between the hours of eight and nine, I heard an unusual noise ; it was that of men hastily ascending the stairs. Immediately I rose up in the bed, inclined my head and listened most attentively. I held in my breath for the purpose of hearing more distinctly, and I soon perceived the sound of sabres striking against the steps, and that of the keys which served to open and shut the cells. At first I thought that they stopped at the first, then at the second floor. I was soon undeceived. They came up to the third. They stopped before my door ; it opened with a crash, and in an instant my chamber was filled with jailors and soldiers. The commandant of the tower, holding a lantern in his hand, approached my bed and said ; " General, be pleased to rise." " Rise ; why ?" " You are to be transferred." " Where ?" " You will be told that." I thought all was over with me ; and I was confirmed in this persuasion by his saying, as he observed me bringing away some of my effects : " Leave them here ; we will send them to you to-morrow."

Recommending my soul to God, I descended the stairs surrounded by guards. On the second floor, there issued from a cell a man somewhat advanced in years, enveloped in a doublet of grey silk ; he appeared to be an ecclesiastic. There is, thought I, another victim of the restless

and suspicious policy of the emperor. We were in the court when this unknown person approached my ear and said ; “ I think that the allies are near Paris.” “ What allies ?” rejoined I. “ The Russians, the Austrians, and the Prussians.” At these words I stepped back, and earnestly examining the appearance of the speaker ; “ Ah ! surely,” said I, “ the man is mad. Captivity has turned the head of this unfortunate creature. The Russians, the Austrians, the Prussians, near Paris !” A carriage now approached : we were ordered to ascend. I made my companion get in first, and I took my place as far as possible from him, having often heard it said, that we should be distrustful of maniacs. Two agents of the police placed themselves before us, and gave the word to the coachman—a *La Force*. We drove off.

An hour later I learned that *La Force* was another state prison. When we had passed the wicket, we were asked our names. I listened attentively to what my companion would answer. He replied, that he was the Bishop of Troyes. “ Good,” said I ; “ he is now a bishop, it would not have cost him more to have been pope ;” and I laughed to myself. Soon, however, I learned to my great astonishment that he was not a maniac, but that he was really the Bishop of Troyes, the celebrated Abbè de Boulogne, equally renowned for his virtues and eloquence. I was then informed, for the first time, of the great events which had occurred during my captivity. “ My lord,” said I to him, “ I have taken you for a fool : will you pardon me ?”

M. de Boulogne had been arrested at the end of the preceding November, and consequently knew all the calamities which befel the French army after the retreat from Moscow. He rightly conjectured that the prisoners were transferred, lest the allies should attack the tower of Vincennes. On the other hand, I had left Napoleon

marching against Russia, at the head of the armies of the other European powers. After eighteen months, to hear that this extraordinary man had fallen as lead in the mighty waters, and that the Russians, Austrians, and Prussians, were approaching Paris, necessarily appeared to me incredible.

Monsignore de Gregorio, then a Roman prelate, now a cardinal, came the same night to *La Force* ; as also Father Fontana, General of the Barnabites, who was also subsequently invested with the purple, and died, some years since, in the odour of sanctity, and the Abbè Pedicini, secretary to Cardinal Pacca. I was lodged by myself. M. de Troyes was first put with M. de Gregorio and Father Fontana ; but, at the end of some days, to afford them more room, he asked to obtain a place in my chamber, which I granted with pleasure. Never will I forget the five or six weeks which I passed with this worthy prelate. His manners were easy and dignified ; and his conversation, sometimes gay, sometimes grave, evinced the goodness of his heart, the correctness of his judgment, and the variety of his acquirements. In any other circumstances this time would have appeared short.

The allied troops appeared before Paris on the 30th of March. The cannons were firing, nevertheless, I was asleep. The bishop awoke me suddenly, crying out, in a tone of voice sufficiently burlesque ; "Thou sleepest Brutus, and Rome is yet in chains." The sovereigns were in the capital on the 1st of April, and one of their first acts was to order the liberation of all political prisoners. I was free.

Adieu, dear Charles.

LETTER IV.

Church of Notre Dame de Lorette—The Madeleine—Obelisk of Luxor — Louis XVI. — Marie Antoinette— Expiatory monument—Triumphal arch — Versailles — National museum — Fieschi — French church of Chatel — St. Sulpice—St. Roch — St. Genevieve—Departure from Paris.

Paris, 20th of August, 1837.

I HAVE just returned from a visit to the church of *Notre Dame de Lorette*. This church is too beautiful, or, to give you a better idea of it, too richly ornamented. There is about it an excess of painting and of gilding; these are found in all its details: and even the tribunals of penance, which elsewhere have an austere appearance—such precisely as the sentiments they ought to inspire—here suggest light and agreeable thoughts. No; this temple possesses nothing to command respect; nothing to produce those sweet emotions which are the support of fervour and the delights of the Christian soul. The traveller may visit it through curiosity; I doubt much if the culprit seeks it as the asylum of God's mercy.

Chateaubriand has justly observed, that the more the ages which erected our monuments were distinguished for their faith and piety, the more these monuments are imposing by the grandeur and elevation of their character. It is not then wonderful that in our age of indifference, there reigns such a confusion of ideas, and that we are even incapable of erecting a church. Let us take the *Madeleine** as an illustration. I have approached this colossal and majestic edifice; I have gazed on the numerous Corinthian columns, which, like so many giants,

* The name of a beautiful church lately built in Paris.

surround it ; I have admired the elevation of the peristyle, which, in favourable weather, is crowded with news-hunters and idlers ; and I have asked myself : Is this a Christian temple, built for the accommodation of the devout and recollected faithful, or a profane theatre, consecrated to scenic representations and licentiousness ? What object did the architect propose to himself ? What effect did he design to produce ? Wherefore these iron railings ? Should not the church of God be always accessible ? Is there a moment in life in which weak mortals have not need of grace and consolation ? Yes, I must repeat, it is grand, imposing, and colossal — but it is not a church.

One evening, after having walked for some time under the peristyle of this temple, which, in some respects, reminded me of that of Balbeck, and after having enjoyed the magic effect produced at this hour by its colonnade, I stopped to contemplate anew the famous obelisk which was before me. I was in Egypt when it was taken from Luxor, and I might have then said to it, “ We will meet at Paris ;” but I could never have imagined that a monument, which had remained immovable for so many ages, would have got here before me. I considered this giant of the desert ; I measured, in thought, its proportions, and I was endeavouring to ascend to the epoch, which had given it birth, when suddenly it seemed to have disappeared, and left in its place a scaffold,* surrounded by a numerous populace, who, with eyes intent on the instrument of death, impatiently awaited a victim. The victim approaches ! Do you see that man with noble front and majestic gait ? It is Louis XVI, the descendant of St. Louis, of Henry IV., of Louis the Great, the head of

* The Obelisk of Luxor is placed in the Place Louis Quinze, where Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette were guillotined.

the house of Bourbon, the sovereign of the most beautiful kingdom of the world ! His hands have carried the sceptre, they are now bound by vile cords ; his head has borne the crown, it now falls under the axe of the executioner !

At this picture of memory I groaned, and receding somewhat, by a sudden and involuntary motion of my hands, I covered my eyes, as if to avoid witnessing the crime which was being consummated. Another outrage was in preparation. In the same place I seemed to behold the same multitude encircle another scaffold. A cart slowly approaches. On this cart were many condemned persons, among whom I perceived a woman, her arms tied behind her back. Her features, disfigured by her sufferings, were emaciated but noble, and her countenance majestic. I recognised the Queen of France, the daughter of the Cæsars, a child of that august house of Austria, " which," says Bossuet, " has produced, for so many ages, none but kings and emperors !" Who could have believed it ? After having been for twenty years the idol of France, this queen, so beautiful and so good, Marie Antoinette, before receiving the fatal blow, is insulted by a vile rabble !

Never since the world's creation was there given a greater instance of the nothingness of human greatness ; never have men seen so well, as in this bloody catastrophe, of what excesses they are capable, when God, to punish them for their disorders, gives them up to the spirit of error, and abandons them to their own passions.

And in place of the expiatory monument, which ought to have been erected on the spot, where the blood of the Lord's anointed flowed ; in place of such a memorial, which would have read a terrible lesson to people and to kings, a monolithe has been erected at vast expense, the style of which neither accords with the place in which it

is found, nor with the monuments that surround it. Was it intended, by attracting the traveller's attention to this memorial, which is so authentic a witness of Egyptian greatness—to transport him, as it were, to another country ; to present to him other times and other manners, and thus make him forget the crime, which has sullied France and affrighted the world ? Vain efforts ! It is not so easy to forget as to be silent ; and at the tribunal of the human race, as well as that of the Sovereign Judge, mercy is imparted only to repentance.

Not far from the obelisk rises the triumphal arch of *L'Etoile*. This monument was begun by Napoleon, and has been finished under the present ruler of France. It is the result of thirty years' labour, and has cost ten millions of francs. This triumphal arch, by its colossal proportions, leaves far behind it every thing of the kind found elsewhere. Neither that of Constantine, nor that of Septimius, nor any thing that I have seen at Karnac, or at Thebes, can be compared with it. In an artistic point of view, it is one of the wonders of the world ; but in another respect, what is it ? You will admit, dear Charles, that it is a magnificent monument of the vanity of human things. What has France gained by all the victories it is designed to eternize ? Equally ambitious as Alexander, like him Napoleon found the earth too narrow a sphere for his exploits : less fortunate than the Macedonian, he survived his own empire. I never think on this extraordinary man, without applying to him the following passage of Massillon. The orator, after having drawn the picture of one of those kings who exalt the idol of their greatness on the ruins of people and nations, exclaims, "Great God ! what a scourge for the earth ! what a gift you bestow on men, in presenting them with such a ruler ! His glory will be always stained with blood. Some enthusiast may, perhaps, celebrate his vic-

tories, but the provinces, the cities, the plains, will weep over them. Magnificent monuments may be raised to immortalize his conquests, but the smoking cinders of so many cities which once flourished ; the desolation of so many plains, despoiled of their ancient beauty ; the ruins of so many walls, which in their fall have buried under them numbers of peaceful citizens ; the many calamities that will endure after he shall have passed away—will be mournful monuments, which will immortalize his vanity and folly. He will have passed, as a destructive torrent, and not as a majestic stream, that confers happiness and abundance on the earth over which it flows. His name will be recorded by posterity among the conquerors, but it will not be found among the good kings ; and the history of his reign will be only remembered by reason of the evils which it caused. Thus, although his pride may have reached to heaven, although his head may have touched the clouds, although his success may have equalled his desires, all this accumulated glory will, at the end, be but a handful of clay, which will only be known by the infection it exhales.”

From the arch *de l'Etoile* I went to Versailles, and returned from it quite astonished at the fine things I saw there. Who has not at least heard of this palace, where Louis XIV. fixed his residence, and which, in itself, resembles a city ? The astonished eye passes from wonder to wonder, and knows not which most to admire, the magnificence of the architect, or the extensive gardens, adorned with beautiful statuary, and watered by numerous *jets d'eau*, which make it a place of delights. This palace, however, was for a time deserted, and was only regarded as a memento of the extremes of human fortune. The king, Louis Phillip, wishing to restore it to its ancient splendor, conceived the happy idea of making it a national museum. He justly thought that the monarch, under

whom the arts flourished, would willingly receive them into his residence, and continue to protect them with the shadow of his name. He was not mistaken. This national museum is so beautiful, that during the three months it has been open to the public, its immense halls have been filled by multitudes, who succeed each other uninterruptedly, like the waves of an agitated sea. I also visited it, but only spent a few moments in the public museum, because the crowd did not permit me to fix my attention on any object. As soon as I had left it, I asked and obtained permission to visit some private saloons.

I sought those, especially, which belonged to the age of Louis XIV., and with my mind full of this monarch, whose spirit seems still to linger in many parts of his ancient palace, I did not soon tire of contemplating whatever recalled to my mind the magnificence of his court, and the various events of his reign. There I found those great men, whose glory augments his renown, because he produced them by his talent, employed them with discernment, and rewarded them with munificence. I seemed still to see the Condès, the Turennes, the Luxembourgs, the Catinats, the Villars, commanding his armies; the Colberts, the Louvois, directing his councils; the Boileaus, the Racines, writing the annals of his reign, or amusing his leisure; the Bossuets and the Fenelons instructing his children; and the Fléchiers, the Bourdaloues, the Massillons instructing himself, and announcing, with their prophetic voice, that "God alone is great." Other portraits made me cast down my eyes, for they recalled melancholy weaknesses; more, indeed, than mere weaknesses: but this monarch, like David, acknowledged his guilt, and, like him, offered to God a contrite and humbled heart.

I then passed into the chamber where Louis XIV. died, and I stood for a long time before the bed whereon

he expired. Oh, dear Charles, how eloquent is this couch, and, to use the language of Bossuet, how it exposes the entire vanity of this world. This king, whose greatness was the admiration of Europe, had only a few servants around him in his last moments, and his voice, which a little before was heard with respect and obeyed with promptitude in the most distant provinces of his kingdom, was scarcely listened to in the interior of his palace. Happily the thought of God did not abandon him in those trying moments. So great was his resignation, that he said to one of his weeping attendants: "Why do you weep for me? did you think me immortal?" To another, who had called him "Majesty," he said: "There is no majesty here, but the majesty of death."

My next visit was to the gallery of battles. What heroism, what glory is there presented to the view! No; whatever be your nation, whatever opinion you profess, under whatever standard you may have fought, you cannot but admire those victories—the cities taken by assault—the glorious deaths—the judicious retreats—the triumphant marches—in a word, those feats of arms, which have so much exalted the military glory of France. But, alas! among so many illustrious warriors, how few are there who placed their confidence in God, and referred to him the success which crowned their efforts. Why has religion no place in these pictures? Ought not she to animate the warrior, fighting for his country, sustain him in his struggles, accompany him in his triumph, or shed a ray of immortality on his grave? The *preux chevaliers* were not ignorant of these truths. Witness that brave Duguesclin, who, after having given through life many proofs of his attachment to his faith, when dying, exhorted the companions of his glory, wherever they might make war, to spare ecclesiastics, women and children. Witness Bayard, who, being mortally wounded

at the retreat of Rebec, ordered himself to be carried to the foot of a tree, where, with his face turned to the enemy, he kissed the hilt of his sword, whose form resembled that of the sign of our redemption, and humbly asked God to pardon all his faults. Without ascending so far back, I found, in the age of Louis XIV., an age fruitful in heroes, Turenne causing mass to be celebrated daily in his tent, and saying to his officers, when they flattered both themselves and him with the assurance of victory : " Our lot is not in our own hands ; if God does not accomplish the work, we shall be beaten." I brought to mind the last moments of the Marechal de Luxemburg, whose death was so edifying, that Bourdaloue, who assisted him, said : " I have not lived like him, but I would like to die like him." Could I forget the rival of Prince Eugene, Villars, who, when wounded at the battle of Malplaquet, was not ashamed to demand the succours of religion, and said : " Since the army cannot see Villars die as a hero, let them see him die as a Christian."

The great captains which France produced during the last fifty years, were not inferior in bravery to those of past ages, but we would be inclined to imagine that they did not recognise the same God, or that He is no longer the God of armies. I see many die gloriously on the battle-field ; why does not religion pour into their wounds the balm of her consolations, and from a life of trouble and peril, conduct them to one of eternal rest ? Do we think that the ear of the soldier, because stunned by the cannon's thunder, must necessarily be deaf to the voice of religion ? or would we accuse of weakness him, who, when struck by the fatal ball, and pouring forth his heart's blood, would remember the advice of his mother—would call for the minister of reconciliation, and ask for the assistance which he would, at least, have found in his village-cabin ? Afflicting thought ! Men exalt

the soldier's sentiment of honour, and when this feeling brings him to death, they forget that he has a soul !

I entered Paris while engaged in these reflections. I cannot move about in this immense capital, without finding matter for still more saddening thoughts.

Yesterday as I passed through the Boulevards, the driver of the carriage suddenly stopped to show me the miserable house where the infamous Fieschi, with his infernal machine, destroyed so many victims. At the sight, I experienced the horror, which the resort of a cowardly assassin always inspires. What an unheard of outrage ! —to attempt the life of a prince, and that prince the depository of the sovereign power—of a prince who is a father, and that, at a time when he is surrounded by his children and by the *elite* of the kingdom. The trial of this wretch showed in the Parisians, at least in such of them as took an interest in the affair, a degree of depravity hitherto unknown in the most corrupt communities. The shameless concubine of this monster was treated at first with some attention ; and when Fieschi's head rolled on the public scaffold, she had the unblushing effrontery to exhibit herself for money in a public place, where a crowd was assembled to gaze on her. All this took place in the centre of European civilization, and in the midst of the people who claim to be the most amiable in the world !

From the house of Fieschi, I passed to the Temple erected by Chatel. It is a kind of dirty coach-house, adorned with small tri-colored standards, filled with old chairs, and covered with detestable pictures. On the gate are inscribed these words: *Eglise Française*. To reach the sanctuary, you must traverse a large court, encumbered with merchandise, packages and cars. At the entrance, I saw the lithograph likeness of the pretended primate of Gaul, guarded by an iron grate, doubtless,

through respect. There were also some books for the service of the new church; and the following singular announcement printed in large characters: "*On Tuesday next the primate Chatel will preach on the dignity of woman, and after the sermon will present each lady with a bouquet.*" This was too much. I hung down my head, shook the dust from my feet and retired. In truth, such charlatanism would only be ridiculous, if it were not a horrible scandal, and a frightful sacrilege.

Forty years ago, France saw its churches desecrated by the apotheosis of the Goddess of Reason. That was an epoch of terror, of frenzy, and of blood. But in our days, when the prejudices against religion begin to subside, when all enlightened men seem to return to the principles of good sense, and the social body seeks to support itself by the ideas of order and conservatism—to see a Catholic priest, who has publicly abjured his character and his vows, thus belie his conscience, and, morning and night, preach error—to hear him unceasingly insult the church which he has quitted, and the religion of thirty millions of French people, creates ineffable disgust. It is not necessary to be a Catholic to feel the heart swell with indignation at such conduct—it is enough to be an honest man. Has French legislation then no means of defending society against these monstrous excesses?

The pestiferous doctrines of Chatel are not, however, so rapidly diffused as might be apprehended. An age of indifferentism is alike inattentive to falsehood and to truth, and such of the vast multitude that inhabit this capital as are adepts in incredulity, neglect all kinds of churches, and only frequent the theatres. As for those who have preserved the faith—and they are still in great number—they live conformably to its maxims, and discharge with fervor the duties which religion imposes on them.

How delightful is it to see at an early hour, when so many others repose after the fatigues of debauchery, the altars of Jesus Christ surrounded by young men and young women, who come to derive from the inexhaustible source of all good strength wherewith to resist the numberless seductions which are presented here to them. Few strangers witness this sight, which, nevertheless, deserves their attention. They speak badly of the capital; they describe it as a place altogether profane nor do I undertake to justify it. Still it has its elect; but it is before the rising of the sun, when the churches are just opened, that these faithful souls are to be seen silently flying to the sacred tabernacle, and there gathering the salutary manna which nourishes and fortifies them.

I was speaking a few days ago of all the crimes which have been committed, and which are still committed in Paris, when some one answered me, "Notwithstanding all this, God visibly protects France, and especially the capital, which increases each year in riches and in population."—"Do you know," said I, interrupting him, "to what this sinful city is indebted for its preservation? I will tell you. It is to the sacrifice of the Mass, which is daily celebrated in it—to the prayers of those virgins who dedicate themselves so generously, either to the Christian education of youth, or exhaust themselves in the most painful attendance on the victims of sickness and disease. It is to the prayers of some modest artizan, who retires each evening to his garret, after having, perhaps, escaped being crushed by the equipage of some rich financier. It is to the prayers of a mother, who assembles, each evening, her little ones round the image of Mary, and teaches them to intercede for the guilty; or perhaps to the prayers of an old domestic, whose fidelity is esteemed while her piety is laughed at." Such is Paris. In it are found great virtues and great vices. On

the one hand, you will see the most lively faith, the most tender piety, the most exact regularity ; on the other, you will witness the most audacious scepticism, the most determined impiety, the most disgusting and unconcealed immorality. This contrast, which is also observable in the other cities of the kingdom, gave occasion to a witty Cardinal to say, " That there was no purgatory for the French ; they go immediately to heaven or to hell."

I take particular delight in visiting the church of St. Sulpice. There I find not only a beautiful edifice, which elevates the soul and inspires it with sublime thoughts—not only can I contemplate one of the prettiest chapels ever consecrated to Mary, but I have also the opportunity of admiring this nursery of young Levites, who under experienced guides, study the rules of morality and the principles of religion. When I see them humbly inclined around the altar, I imagine that I behold angels descended for an instant on earth, to adore the majesty of the God who there renews his sacrifice. How many young priests issue forth every year from this retreat, to carry into the midst of the world the words of eternal life, and exercise the art of arts—that of directing souls ! How many illustrious prelates owe to St. Sulpice the treasures of their learning, the purity of their doctrine, and the eminence of their virtues ! It is not my province to pronounce the eulogium of the directors of seminaries. To enable you, however, to appreciate the Sulpicians, I must tell you that they have no other object than to form young ecclesiastics to the various functions of the ministry. Faithful to the object of their institute, and deeply penetrated with the spirit which becomes the dignity of the priesthood, they communicate to their disciples a taste for serious studies and the habitual exercise of Christian virtue. They never depart from an unlimited submission to the authority of the first pastors, and hence

they have always been loved and respected, even by those in whose opinions they do not coincide. With insuperable modesty they avoid *eclat*, and flee celebrity, and thus remain strangers to all the motions which ambition, interest, or pride, can excite in men. I must add that this reserve ensures their safety. Indeed, however suspicious a government may be, what could it fear from teachers, who, composing a voluntary association, keep so constantly within the circle of their duties, and the enclosure of their own house, that they are frequently unknown to the greater part of the inhabitants of the cities where they have establishments, and are only familiar with the youth whom they instruct, and the different orders of the clergy whom they edify.

Sometimes I go to the Church of St. Roch. In this temple a beneficent and pious princess* comes humbly to mix in the crowd, and there, without affectation, humbles herself before the God of St. Louis and of Maria Theresa, her ancestors, and offers to him the tender solitudes of a wife and of a mother. In this church the most beautiful harmony presides over the chaunting of the sacred canticles; and the sweetest voices, the most varied instruments, unite with the deep and prolonged sounds of the organ, which reverberate from the vaulted roof of the temple. One might imagine that he heard the music of angels: an innocent snare, which the zeal of the pastor lays for the curiosity of a great number of persons. Those who come only for the music, are inclined to wait for the sermon, if they should see a celebrated preacher ascend the pulpit. They listen and are pleased, and, not unfrequently, the thirst of justice succeeds that of sensible satisfaction.

After having spoken of the church of St. Sulpice and St. Roch, shall I attempt, dear Charles, to speak of that

* The present Queen.

which Clovis began in honour of St. Peter and St. Paul, and which, since the year 512, when the virgin was buried there, bore the name of St. Geneviève. This edifice was replaced by one of the most beautiful temples that man had ever erected to the worship of God, to accomplish a vow which Louis XV. made when sick, at Metz. In 1791, this church was taken from religion, and destined to receive the ashes of the citizens who had deserved well of their country! Then were transferred to it, in triumph, the remains of the chief of modern philosophers (Voltaire,) and his odious carcase, which the earth refused to receive, was deposited in this temple, with those of his accomplices in guilt. This edifice was subsequently restored to its original purpose: but I can say that I never experienced a more profound sorrow, than on learning that its destination was again changed, and that the decrees of 1791 had been re-enacted. A new inscription attested the metamorphose, and, from this time, Voltaire, Rousseau and Mirabeau, are exhibited there to the public veneration! Good God! in what an age do we live! Are these the great men of whom we are proud? Are these the models we offer to the present and succeeding generations? Has not the cynic standard-bearer of infidelity diffused enough of the poison of his corruption? Has not the sophist of Geneva sufficiently bewildered men's minds, and the licentious Mirabeau spread abroad enough of his principles of anarchy and sedition?

I was absorbed in these deeply afflicting thoughts, when I received a religious periodical, in which the group on the pediment of this edifice is considered in various respects. The reflections of the author are very just, and I feel a pleasure in transcribing some of them for you.

“France, then, has no past history; she is but of yesterday; and she has had but few children who have distinguished themselves by their virtues, their genius, or

their bravery! Charlemagne, St. Louis, Bayard, Henry IV. did not do honour to the country which produced and cherished them. Some sophists, whose ashes are not yet cold, and whose memory posterity already stigmatizes—men who were involved in the sanguinary agitations of their country—soldiers, whose success forged iron chains for their fellow citizens—these are the great men of France! Do I not mistake? Does not Fénélon appear in the group? I have not been able to discover him; he must lie in the back ground, concealed by the artist's instinctive idea of propriety, which told him that the Archbishop of Cambrai was out of place in the company into which he had been introduced. Hence he dared not place Joan d'Arc in the same group with the bad citizen and impure writer, who had endeavoured to sully the reputation of that holy heroine; or St. Vincent of Paul, this great benefactor of mankind, this saviour of abandoned infants, because he had placed there Jean Jacques Rousseau, who filled the charitable asylums, established by this saint, with the unhappy creatures to whom his vices gave birth."

To these reflections I will subjoin the portrait of Voltaire, sketched by a respectable writer of deep religious sentiment, who united extraordinary learning with a lively faith, and who was superior to the evasions of flattery or the miserable artifices of vanity. Listen to him describing a man, of whom an impious faction would make a God:—

"Have you not observed that the divine malediction was impressed on his front? After so many years we can yet behold it. Go and look at his countenance at the palace of *L'Ermitage*. I never see it without feeling happy that it has not been transmitted to us by some chisel, guided by the spirit of Grecian art, which might have diffused over it a certain *beau idéal*. Here every

thing is natural. It is as correct as a *post mortem* impression. Look at this forehead, which shame never reddened ; at these two sunken eye-sockets, wherein, like extinct craters, the ebullitions of voluptuousness and hatred seem to have left traces of their passage. This mouth, or, if the expression be allowable, this terrific *riottus*, extending from ear to ear ; and these lips, contracted by malice, and ready to vomit forth blasphemy or sarcasm. Speak not to me of this man ; I cannot bear the thought of him. Ah, what evils has he brought on us ! Like to the insect, the pest of our gardens, which gnaws only the roots of the most precious plants, Voltaire, with his sting, ceases not to wound the two roots of society—women and youth. He infects them with his pestilential breath, which he thus transmits from generation to generation. To palliate these indefensible atrocities, his admirers vainly din our ears with his high-sounding eulogiums of the most venerated objects. These besotted men do not see that they consummate his condemnation. Had Fenelon written *The Prince*, with the same pen that he has depicted the Joys of Elysium, he would be a thousand times more vile and culpable than Machiavel. Voltaire's great crime was the prostitution of his genius, which had been given to him that he might praise God and extol virtue. He cannot, like so many others, allege youth, heedlessness, the influence of passion, or the common weakness of our nature. Nothing excuses him ; his corruption is of a character peculiar to himself ; it takes root in the deepest fibres of his heart, and is supported by all the powers of his understanding. It is always found allied to sacrilege, and defies God while it destroys man. With unexampled impiety, this insolent blasphemer dared to become the personal enemy of the Saviour of the world ; he dared to apply an opprobrious epithet to Him, and call that adorable law which

the Man-God brought on earth—infamous! God punished him by withdrawing from him, and giving him up to the excesses of his unbridled will. Other cynics astonished virtue; Voltaire made vice itself blush. He plunges into its filthy pool; rolls and riots in it. He gives up his imagination to the enthusiasm of hell, which lends him all its strength to drag him to the extremities of human guilt. He imagines prodigies—monsters which make one pale with horror. Paris crowned him; Sodom would have banished him. He was a shameless profaner of the universal language, and of its greatest names; and is only surpassed in vileness by those who love and admire him. How can I describe the sentiments with which he inspires me? When I think on what he might have done, and what he has done, his matchless talents only inspire me with a species of holy and indefinable rage. Hesitating between admiration for his powers, and horror at his vices, I would sometimes wish to raise a statue to him ——— by the hands of the executioner.”

I can remain no longer at Paris; a terrible weight oppresses my soul. I have given orders for my departure. Adieu, my friend, I embrace you tenderly, and love you with all my heart, in that of our common Master.

LETTER V.

Journey to Lyons—Banks of the Saône—Ile Barbe—Faith and charity of the Lyonese—Fourvières—First martyrs of Gaul—Saint Blandina—Church of St. Irenæus.

Lyons, Sept. 15th, 1837.

I HAVE just arrived at Lyons. At Châlons I took the steam-boat, that I might enjoy the enchanting views which the banks of the Saône present. It was a magnificent day ; the sky was cloudless, and the rays of the sun, reflected in the river, produced the appearance of luminous ridges in the water. We appeared to be sailing down through waves of light. The calmness and tranquillity of the river inspired me with salutary reflections. I seemed to behold, in its course, the image of that life which grace had led me to embrace. I felt happy, and thanked Providence for having so often preserved me from the shipwreck, to which I had been frequently exposed on the stormy sea of the world.

From Châlons to Mâcon, the Saône waters scarcely any thing but vast plains ; but below Mâcon, the soil appears better, vegetation more luxuriant, and cultivation more varied. On the right bank of the river are populous villages and vine-covered hills, which project into the smiling valleys, and are surmounted by beautiful castles or elegant dwelling-houses. The villages on the left bank are found at greater intervals : but the occupants appear to be equally industrious and rich as those on the opposite side. Extensive tracts produce abundant crops, and the rich pasturages are always covered with numberless flocks. The river here has many windings, which please the traveller by the variety of prospect they

afford. Sometimes they divide, and encircle islets, on which are found the modest willow and the proud poplar.

Lower down, within a league of Lyons, we meet with the *Ile Barbe*. This island, formerly so celebrated, is only twelve hundred paces long by three hundred broad. In its northern extremity are seen some old walls, the precious remains of the first monastery in France, which, having been demolished by the Saracens, was restored and considerably enlarged by Charlemagne. He invited to it the monks of Mount Cassino, and to honour the science and the virtue of which it was the asylum, enriched it with valuable gifts and privileges. The monastery soon grew into a great abbey, and solemn festivals, in honour of Our Lady, were celebrated there. It is not easy for us to form an idea of the multitudes which these festivals attracted to the isle from the neighbouring provinces. Six other churches were successively built for their accommodation. After the ceremonies of religion, the people indulged in the expression of their innocent joy. The isle resounded with the sound of music; and the cheerful repast and joyous dance were everywhere to be seen. What now remains of these ancient practices? In 1562, the Calvinists did, what the Saracens had done in a barbarous age, they destroyed the monastery, and massacred the monks. Some towers were yet left standing; some steeples attested the faith of the ancient inhabitants. The revolution consummated the work of destruction, and the island scarcely retains any remains of those respectable monuments, with which so many recollections are connected, although it is still frequented at Easter and Pentecost. The roads, which run along the two banks of the Saône, are, at those seasons, covered with pedestrians and horsemen, modest cabriolets, and splendid equipages, while small boats ply on the river.

Under the spreading foliage of the trees, which shadow the southern extremity of the isle, are to be seen companies of musicians and of dancers, and tables loaded with eatables. But, alas! these festivals no longer excite a religious feeling. Near the *Ile Barbe* the banks of the river approach each other; the bed of the Saône becomes narrowed, and its waters appear to flow more slowly. The traveller enjoys a new species of delight in the more distinct view he has of the vineyards, orchards, gardens, sparkling fountains, and pleasure houses, with the freshening shade and the prolonged avenue.

By this route, which is at once convenient, agreeable and picturesque, I came to Lyons. This city is, without doubt, the second in the kingdom in extent and riches, and the first in piety. I have no doubt but that the devotion which its inhabitants have for the numerous martyrs, whose relics they possess, and their veneration for Mary, to whom they are peculiarly devoted, have produced that lively faith which characterizes them, and that attachment to the cause of religion, for which they are distinguished.

Faith must show itself by its works. This precept is well understood by the Lyonese; and hence there are few cities, not only in France, but in Europe, which contain so many charitable institutions. You will find them for all ages, for both sexes, and for all kinds of infirmities. The new-born infant, the old man about to terminate his course, the resourceless incurable, the desolate orphan, the penitent, the broken-hearted matron—all are relieved, all are provided with the necessities of life. Here benevolence descends to the most ordinary and minute details, and misery is not forced to wait, or exposed to the humiliation of mendicancy; it is anticipated, and spared the pain of manifesting itself. Every day, and each hour of every day, may

be seen courageous youths, young and timid virgins, and opulent matrons, who quit their gilded salons—seek out the abodes of misery, and feel greater happiness in having found them, than others would experience in discovering a treasure. And all this is done silently and unostentatiously, for the necessitous only see the hand that relieves them, and most frequently know not the name of the consoling angel who has visited them.

If you ask how the Lyonese are able to exercise so many acts of beneficence, you must be told that in Lyons, in the most distinguished families, and among the most respectable circles, the ordinary subject of conversation is the poor! In this city, the distressed excite general and constant sympathy; the merchant thinks of them in his speculations, the artizan gives them the first fruits of his labour, and the child divides with them its gifts. In a word, the active charity of the Lyonese applies every thing, and profits by every thing, for the advantage of the objects of its most tender solicitude, the poor.

So charitable a city was worthy to become the cradle of the most useful enterprise of which the church of these latter days can boast—I mean the *Œuvre de la Propagation de la Foi*—a work of real progress, according to the remark of a learned bishop, since it is designed to redeem people from barbarism to civilization, from ferocity to mildness, from rapacity and licentiousness to justice and moderation. This enterprise, so successful in its results, so simple in its details, and so easy in its administration, has made the light of the gospel shine on the nations that were seated in the shadow of death. A small alms and a short prayer are alone required to entitle its members to have a share in the merits of those missionaries, who expose themselves to so many dangers, and suffer so many privations.

This society has been enriched with the favours of the three last sovereign pontiffs, and has been recommended in the most pressing manner by all the bishops of France. It now begins to spread itself through the surrounding kingdoms, and will soon be universally diffused. May that religion, which is propagated in the world's extremities, never abandon our shores? May those new Christians never be obliged to bring us back to the truths we shall have announced to them. At all events, they will frequently turn their eyes to Europe, whence they have received such abundant succour; they will pray for the members of this holy association; they will pay for all France, but their first prayers will be for Lyons.

How shall I describe, my dear Charles, the spectacle presented by the churches of Lyons on Sundays and festivals? Scarcely do the eighteen parish churches, in which there is a constant succession of masses, suffice for the wants of the faithful. The same throng is seen in the private chapels in different quarters of the city; in those attached to colleges, hospitals, and religious houses. But it is, particularly, on the feasts of the Virgin, and on Saturday, which is consecrated to her veneration, that you will be edified by the pilgrimage of Fourvières.* What a concourse! In this ascending and tortuous road, faith sustains and fortifies the women, the children, and the old men; love is in their hearts, and hope in their looks. Enter the chapel, if the dense crowd permit you, what sentiments will you experience! What impression will not be made on you, by the multitudes engaged in prayer, the flambeaux which burn before the altar, and the numerous votive offerings, which cover the walls—pic-

* A beautiful sanctuary, which overhangs the city, on the right-hand side of the Saône.

tures, indeed, which the artist would not always admire, but which nevertheless attest the goodness and protection of Mary, and the gratitude of her votaries! This chapel is truly worthy of the Queen of Heaven; there she is pleased to be invoked, and there she is never invoked in vain. Twice did the cholera approach Lyons. The inhabitants redoubled their fervour; they multiplied their offerings, and during nine days the venerable prelate, who is charged with the administration of this diocese, notwithstanding his great age and infirmities, visited this chapel with a portion of his clergy, to offer himself a victim for his flock. These prayers were not disregarded. Mary presented them at the throne of her Eternal Son, and the exterminating angel turned aside from this favoured city. An inscription placed over the principal entrance perpetuates the recollection of the danger; and the Lyonese cease not to turn their eyes towards that hill, whence they derived assistance.

A little below Fourvières is *La place de l'Antiquaille*, so called from the ruins of ancient monuments, with which this hill is covered. There, on the site of a palace, which tradition points out as the birth-place of Claudius and Caracalla, is placed a vast edifice, which no longer serves its original destination. Before 1792 it was a convent of nuns; it is now an hospital for the treatment of those diseases which the corruption of morals has rendered so general. Strangers are received there. A voluntary administration presides over this establishment; some *sœurs hospitalières*, and many religious men are charged with the details of the attendance. Under the church, which is consecrated to the martyrs of Lyons, is the prison where the venerable Pothinus was confined for having refused to offer sacrifice to the divinities of the empire. He was weak,

infirm, and more than ninety years old : and in two days after he expired. This place has always been much venerated. In 1660, Louis XIV. visited it, bare-headed ; and in 1805, when Pius VII. went to Fourvières, he held a station there.

At some distance is the *Place des Minimes*, where, in 177, under Marcus Aurelius, the blood of the first martyrs of Gaul was shed. Among these was Saint Blandina, a young slave, who, after having been exposed to the wild beasts, by whom she was left unhurt, exhausted by her constancy her judges and executioners, and was finally strangled. Going thence to the south, you come to the church of St. Irenæus. This church, one of the earliest monuments of Christianity in France, was at first a subterraneous chapel, built over the graves of SS. Epipode and Alexander. The faithful assembled here to derive from prayer and the breaking of bread the strength necessary to sustain them in persecution. In 470, St. Patient, Bishop of Lyons, wishing to honour this crypt, repaired it, and built over it the church which forms the present parochial church of St. Irenæus. On the pavement of this church, which is called the upper church, is an inscription in Latin verse, according to which the number of Christians martyred at Lyons under Severus amounted to 19,000. The same inscription is seen in French verses over the door of the subterranean chapel.

Pause—smite thy breast above this holy spot ;
Weep for the slain who here their blood have given,
Victims of Truth—who chose the martyr's lot,
And still point out the surest path to heaven.
The sainted prelate and his band repose
Calmly beneath this ancient monument.
Still with their holy blood the red earth glows ;
Their spirits reign above the firmament.

The blood of nineteen thousand saints, 'tis said,
This spot hath drank :—though none may tell the loss
Of mothers, virgins, sons : for Him they bled,
Who for our sins on Calvary bow'd his head.
Christian ! revere these heroes of the Cross.

To honour those glorious martyrs, many Lyonese who inherit their faith have formed a confraternity, and on their festivals assemble round their altars. This subterranean church with its massive walls, its sombre entrance, and its dark interior, inspires respect and veneration. At the foot of the stairway which leads to it is a pit, where were cast the bones of many of these martyrs. The earth which is taken from it is as yet stained with their blood.

Behind the upper church, on an esplanade, whence there is a view of the environs, is a representation of Calvary. Three cast iron crosses support marble figures of Jesus Christ and the two thieves. Magdalene bathes with her tears her Saviour's feet. St. John and Mary Salomè stand by. These figures, as well as those of two angels in adoration, are also of white marble. Around the court, fourteen small uniform altars, surmounted by alabaster *bas-reliefs*, represent the fourteen stations of the passion. This monument was erected in 1815 by the Lyonese, in thanksgiving for the re-establishment of Pius VII. on the chair of St. Peter, and that of Louis XVIII. on the throne of his fathers.

What a good city is Lyons ! Adieu.

The following beautiful lines, on the martyrdom of St. Blandina, mentioned in page 47, are taken from a late number of the Catholic Telegraph of Cincinnati. The translator feels it almost unnecessary to apologize for their insertion.

BLANDINA, THE MAID OF LYONS.

I.

Strong is the power of Faith in woman's heart—
 Woman, for weakness oft by man disdained—
 With fearless breast she meets each fiery dart,
 By love inspired, by heavenly truth sustained,
 Oft when the furious zeal of man hath waned,
 His tongue spoke treason, and his courage fled—
 HER heart, unfaltering, hath the glory gained,
 With balmy oil to grace the Saviour's head,
 And at his feet her tears—her *martyr blood*—to shed.

II.

Such was thy lot, Blandina ! who didst lead
 Thy trembling brother to the dismal shade ;
 Young, fond, confiding, in that hour of need
 He on thy steadfast words his spirits stayed :
 Serene, though hell its maddest fiends arrayed,
 Still on thy face he gazed, all calm the while ;
 And when devouring tigers round him played,
 One voice he knew, which never did beguile,
 And traced his Saviour's love in thine angelic smile.

III.

Oh, lovely saint ! whom fiercer tortures tried !
 Then came thine hour of darkness—and of light !
 Firmly on God thy glowing soul relied,
 And drank, enraptured drank, those visions bright,
 Which Jesus gives, when he doth take delight,
 Leaning, e'en through the skies, his saints to greet !
 Then rush'd the monsters forth, and in the sight
 Of frantic thousands, battled for their meat !—
 Then went thy soul on high, and took her blissful seat,

IV.

Victorious, and FOREVER—'mid ' the Bless'd !'
 There, where the martyrs of more ancient days
 All on their thrones of massive glory rest,
 Broke forth in rival strains, thy voice of praise :
 Breaks forth, e'en now, in every song they raise
 Who, still arriving, swell that shining throng
 And *shall* break forth, in more resounding lays,
 When all the Ages rise, with voices strong,
 And pour through endless day, one tide of praise alone !

D

LETTER VI.

Departure from Lyons—Steamboat—Valence—Avignon—Porters, the pest of travellers—Chapel of *La Misericorde*—Beautiful ivory crucifix—Picture and poetry by the good king René—Vaucluse—Laura—Petrarch—Pius VI.—La Glaciere.

Marseilles, 13th of December, 1837.

It would be impossible for me to describe what I have to suffer, when preparing to leave a city in which I have for a while resided; I have to undergo the torture of packing up my trunks. This is to me inexpressibly perplexing; and you would smile and sympathize with me, were you to witness my embarrassment. With five or six trunks, valises, &c., before me, I go from one to another, not knowing where to begin: I open them and look at the objects they are to contain, and which lie scattered round my room in admirable disorder. At this sight, as I stoop with difficulty, I become uneasy, and let an occasional sigh escape. Still, I make a beginning. I mislay several things, and then, losing courage, go and sit down at some distance from the causes of my vexation, on which I close my eyes. Must I, then, continue to experience the embarrassments of wealth? Why should a Trappist monk have so much baggage? Is this the poverty of those who have left all to follow Jesus Christ? When I propose these questions to myself, a thousand weak reasons occur to me, to show that I have not any thing superfluous, and that I could not leave a single article behind. Moreover, this time I had my monastic dress with me, and a multiplicity of objects, which had been given to me to bring to Rome, and which I could

not refuse to take. On the eve of my departure, a tap at my door announced the arrival of another "small parcel," confided to my care ; the number of them had wonderfully augmented. How am I to arrange all these things ? Then, indeed, I felt the loss of those good domestics, whose services I had not before sufficiently appreciated. They punctually obeyed my orders, and yet how often through ill humour have I saddened them ! Although destitute of the goods of fortune, were they not still my brethren ? Could I testify too much charity for them ; and did religion impose no other obligation on me than that of paying them a miserable salary ?

Pray for me, dear Charles, that I may offer to God every inconvenience I experience in serving myself, and remember the time when I was well served, without being proportionately grateful.

I had determined to leave Lyons by the steamboat on the feast of the Conception. I rose at three in the morning, and at half-past five I repaired to the church of St. Francis of Sales. The streets were literally inundated. The rain, which fell in torrents during the night, still continued. The wind blew off my hat, and prevented me from holding my umbrella. The darkness was pitchy, and yet I found the church full, and the chapel of the Virgin crowded ! On retiring I saw with pleasure, that the officiating clergy scarcely sufficed to distribute the bread of life to these faithful souls, who, to render themselves more agreeable to Jesus Christ, came before the dawn of day to sit at His table, and openly to proclaim one of the most beautiful prerogatives of His mother.

At nine o'clock, we embarked, and soon lost sight of

————— The city fair,
Whose beauty, wealth, and industry adorn
D 2

These lovely banks, which the enchanted Saône
Unwilling leaves, to join the impetuous Rhone,
And mingle with the sea.

We slept at Valence. As I had no acquaintance on board, I was entirely to myself. Being absorbed in my own reflections, or reading, praying, or taking notes, I took no part in the conversation of the other travellers. While occasionally contemplating the banks of the Rhone, I could not but overhear some part of their conversation, and I perceived that they complained pretty generally of the inconveniences to which they would be subject on disembarking at Avignon. I soon had the opportunity of experiencing them.

When we arrived the rain was falling in torrents, and I was engaged in looking after my baggage, which was being brought up from the hold. Scarcely had the boat touched the place of disembarkation, when a crowd of men, for the most part in rags, leaped on deck, pushed away and upturned every thing which was in their way. They soon reached the place where the baggage of the travellers was placed, and which they seemed to regard as their legitimate prey. I was endeavouring to get near my trunks, when one of them turning on me, said, "Don't strike me, sir." "Who strikes you, my friend?" "You!" "I?" "Yes, you push me." "Get out of my way, and you will not be pushed." "It is my place." "How? your place on my trunks?" "Ah, these are your trunks; so much the better, we will carry them for you. Be satisfied: you will, doubtless, go to Marseilles by the *diligence* of M. Galinè?" "Not at all." Saying this, I go and look for the captain. But judge of my surprise, when endeavouring to regain the place where my luggage had lain, I see it no longer there, but on the backs of six or seven of these gentry, who had already left the boat, and were running with all speed

towards the city, roaring out, "To Galinè ! Galinè ! Galinè !" I darted from the ship, and called out, "Stop, stop." I ran after them, but they soon vanished. Overcome by the weight of my cloak, and by the exertion I had made, I was obliged to stop. I entered a fruit shop, asked permission to sit down, and recounted my mishap. The good woman of the shop immediately tranquillized me, by assuring me that my baggage was safe. "These porters," said she, "are the pest of travellers ; but they were still worse sometime since. In 1830, whenever a traveller would oppose their violence, they were in the habit of crying out, 'a Carlist ! Throw him in ! throw him in !' In 1814, it would have been, 'A Bonapartist ;' at present they have a tariff." "Thus," said I, "every thing is improving ;" and thanking her for her kindness, I resumed my journey.

When I came to the Hotel de l'Europe, I found the porters, who were waiting to be paid. All my trunks were safe. I gave them what they asked, without making them a single reproach, and thanked God for having escaped so well from them.

The following day I went to visit the curiosities of Avignon. I went first to the chapel of *La Misericorde*, where there is an ivory crucifix of rare beauty, which Canova himself admired. A porter introduced me into the chapel, where he left me, telling me that the sister who had charge of the crucifix would come immediately. She was one of those virgins who devote themselves to the care of the sick. After having prostrated herself before the tabernacle, she made a sign to me to follow her to the sacristy, where she shewed me this *chef d'œuvre*, which struck me with admiration, and from which I could scarcely turn away my eyes.

Look on that cross where shame and agony,
Meek as a lamb, He underwent for thee.

Gaze on that brow, pierced by the cruel thorn,
Those hands, those sacred feet, by rude nails torn ;
Those eyes now dim, that heart with sorrow riven,
And pale those lips that wooed our race to heaven.
Look through thy tears upon those streams that gush
From every wound, and through the swell'd veins rush ;
Each streaming wound, each pang the Saviour feels,
The depth of human agony reveals.

Yet turn again—behold that air divine,
Where mercy, love, and majesty combine,
Goodness ineffable, the peace of heaven,
And pity, for a sinful race forgiven,
All blend in that sweet look he casts on thee :
Each trait reveals the hidden Deity.
Then own thy king—adore thy Saviour God ;
To die for thee he left his bright abode—
The prince of darkness from his kingdom hurl'd,
O'erthrew the powers of hell and saved the world.

This crucifix was designed and sculptured in this city in 1659, by Jean Guillermain. He gave it as a ransom for his nephew, who had been condemned to death for a capital crime.

Avignon is one of those places where the axe of the revolution immolated most victims, and where the children of their country, in the name of liberty and equality, employed fire and sword with wonderful activity, to procure for their brethren a greater amount of happiness. What a torrent of blood did they shed ! How many objects of art, how many monuments, did they destroy !

At the old convent of the Celestins, to which the noviciate of the Jesuits was subsequently attached, is preserved a picture representing a skeleton half eaten by worms. The skeleton is of the natural size, and is represented with much effect and accuracy. At one side is the coffin, out of which it has come ; and in a corner of the picture is a spider's web, so exquisitely done, that it is

necessary to touch it to be convinced that it is not real.
Under the picture are some verses.

" I was once of all women the flower, the belle ;
I am now what thou see'st me in this lone cell.
White as snow was my skin, and fresh and tender ;
It is long since dry and dark as a cinder.
My form was as lovely as aught 'neath the sun,
Now a thing the living scarce look upon.
Rich and rare were the robes I wore ;
There the worm now revels and makes his store.
My home was a palace, with all at my will ;
Now I lodge in this coffin, cold, lonely and still.
With tapestry rare was my chamber all hung ;
Now round me the spider his damp web hath flung.
Lady, fair Lady, bright lips hailed me then,
'Twill be long ere they speak of my beauty again.
Their praises, like flowers, around me they shed,
Their tongues are all silent now. How have they fled !
They spoke of my loveliness in lands far and near,
Not a word, not a whisper, now comes to me here.
Let her who is blooming in beauty to day,
Think how swiftly earth's loveliest flowers decay.
Whether maiden, proud lady, or citizen's wife,
Do the good that's before thee—seek God in thy life.
Like me ye are mortal, and one is our doom,
Like me ye shall wither and sleep in the tomb.

The verses, as well as the picture, are by the good king René, Count of Provence and Anjou. After fruitless efforts to conquer the kingdom of Naples, to which he had a claim, he retired to Avignon, where he cultivated the arts of peace, and consoled himself for the reverses he had experienced in the field. The subject of these verses was not very agreeable, but was calculated to produce salutary reflections ; and if they have escaped the common enemy of monks and monarchs, I would recommend them to the notice of the youthful visitors of Avignon, who, as soon as they arrive, visit Vacluse, and look out for the name of Laura, cut in the beech-tree bark by

the hand of Petrarch. Would it not be better, before setting out on this pilgrimage, to cast a look on the state of this woman, who was, perhaps, more beautiful than Laura ; and reflect for a moment on the truths which the grave teaches ? Those who would profit by my advice, if there be any such, would soon see things in another light, and, acknowledging the vanity of the feeling which had before influenced them, would go elsewhere and indulge in different sentiments. I do not wish to touch the crown which graces the poet's brow. I know that he is regarded as the father of Italian poetry ; that he fixed the forms, and determined the destinies of his language ; and that even now the Italians mention the name of Petrarch with an enthusiasm that brooks not criticism, or indeed examination. But is poetry a sufficient title to our admiration ? Do not the different states of life impose on us various obligations, and is the talent of charming the mind and seducing the heart the strongest claim on our esteem in an ecclesiastic, who was charged with sacred functions, and enjoyed considerable benefices ? How could he, with his imagination filled with Laura, raise his hands to heaven, or sing the praises of the Lord ? It is, then, to a criminal passion that Petrarch owes all his renown, and the perpetual subject of his song must be ranked among his weaknesses, perhaps his crimes. Still, such is the corruption of our nature, that the expression of his errors has procured him a place in the memory of men. Every one has, doubtless, his passions, but he should endeavour to restrain them ; true glory is only acquired by subduing them. Petrarch could not have been ignorant of this truth ; and had he sought in religion the remedies of which he stood in need, he might have found other matter for his own amusement and the world's attention, than the agitations of his heart ; and youth would not have found in his writings wherewith to delude their reason,

inflammé their imagination, support and perpetuate their disorders.

I will say a few words to you of Laura. She was married, and this union imposed on her serious duties; she was the mother of eleven children, nine of whom survived her. Let it not be said that the manners of her age excused her: for my part I judge her by the invariable laws of morality, and I believe that virtue ought to blush at the mention of her name.

This too famous woman died of the pestilence in 1348, and was buried in the Franciscans' church. Petrarch survived her; he died in 1374.

In the same church was a cenotaph erected to the memory of the brave Crillon, with this inscription:

"HERE LIES LOUIS BERTON DE CRILLON, SURNAMED THE BRAVE,
STATE COUNSELLOR, KNIGHT OF THE ORDER OF THE KING,
FIELD MASTER OF THE GUARDS, GOVERNOR OF BOULOGNE,
BOULENOIS, TOULON AND TOURS,
AND LIEUTENANT-COLONEL OF THE FRENCH INFANTRY.
STRANGER! HISTORY WILL TELL YOU MORE OF HIM.
HE DIED ON THE 2ND DECEMBER, MDCXV."

Crillon rendered great services to Henry III. and to Henry IV. The republican party, who persecuted kings even in their graves, could not be expected to treat their friends better. In 1793, this monument was destroyed.

The ancient academy of Avignon counted among its members the most distinguished literary characters of Europe, and some who, by their erudition and virtue, had raised themselves from the most obscure stations, to the cardinalate, and even to the Papacy. Such was Benedict XII., of whom a writer of the 16th century relates the following anecdote. "During his pontificate, his father came to see him, with many noble persons, who had dressed him out in silk robes. When he came to salute and make his reverence to the said Pope, the latter

said that he did not know him ; that he was not his father, for that his father did not wear a silken dress. The good man took the hint, returned in his ordinary vesture, and was received kindly by his son, who gave him money to buy a mill, that he might be thus enabled to gain his livelihood. He said that he could not alienate the goods of the church in order to enrich his relatives."

The city of Avignon belonged to the Holy See from 1348. Jane, Queen of Naples and Countess of Provence, sold it to Clement VI., and the Pope resided there till 1376, when Gregory XI. returned to Rome. It was but natural to expect that this city would revert to the province of which it formed a part. To effect this a negotiation would have been necessary, but the revolution found it more simple to take violent possession of it. It is worthy of remark, that in those days of terror, when seditious citizens insulted the papal authority, and a severe famine desolated Avignon, Pius VI., the worthy vicar of Jesus Christ, sent, at his own expense, ships laden with corn, for the relief of this unfaithful city. This action ought not to be forgotten in history ; at least it should be deeply impressed on the heart. The French poet Delile composed the following verses for the portrait of Pius VI. You will readily agree with me that they convey a just idea of this injured Pontiff.

" Pontife révééré, souverain magnanime,
Noble et touchant spectacle et du monde et du ciel,
Il honore à la fois par sa vertu sublime
Le malheur, la vieillesse, et le trône et l'autel."

" Revered as a Pontiff, a noble-hearted Prince, a grand, a touching spectacle to earth and Heaven ; his sublime worth dignifies at once misfortune, old age, the altar and the throne."

On my way to the cathedral, which is at present being restored by the respectable prelate who occupies the See of Avignon, I perceived a number of walls without any

regular order, the greater part of a prodigious height ; a Gothic edifice flanked with towers, surmounted with battlements, and in many places dilapidated. I entered, and having traversed many court yards, passed through immense halls and dark archways, mounted the crazy stairways, I observed, here and there, some remains of paintings, vestiges of its ancient grandeur ; and remarked that several parts were yet occupied and used as stores, prison, barracks. I asked where I was ? I was answered —In the ancient palace of the Popes !

Not far from that rises a tower which inspires fear and horror ; it is *la Glaciere*—a frightful grave of a multitude of victims of both sexes, and of all ages, who were murdered in cold blood by monsters in human form, calling themselves republicans ! O, my friend, how would I wish to bring all these young restless spirits, who are ever dreaming of revolution, to this place ! I would show them these walls, yet stained with blood, and I would say, “ This blood was shed in the name of that liberty you invoke : it is the blood of virtuous citizens, of honest matrons, of innocent virgins, of hoary-headed old men—it is the blood of your ancestors ! ” But, alas ! they would not pay attention to my words. If, as it is said, the errors of the parent will not teach the child experience, it is not astonishing that men should not learn wisdom from the folly of their ancestors !

I was sick on my arrival here, and have been occasionally confined to my room. I hope, however, to leave this place in the first steamboat. The weather is superb, and I am now somewhat better. I went one evening to the sermon, and remarked that I heard no one cough ; at Lyons this was by no means the case. What a moist climate is that of Lyons !—but there are compensations to be found there.

LETTER VII.

Marseilles—Steamboat Maria Christina—Nice—Cassini—Genoa—Christopher Columbus—Andrea Doria—Leghorn—Elba—Bonaparte—Civita Vecchia—Its port—M. de la Mennais—Galleys—The brigand Gasparone.

Civita Vecchia, December 19th, 1837.

MY dear Charles, you must attribute your disappointment in not receiving a letter from Marseilles to the habitual indisposition from which I suffered, while waiting for the steamboat for Civita Vecchia. Before my departure, I had to submit my luggage to the scrutinizing inspection of the custom-house officers. It was in vain that I asked them to tell me what was contraband. They did not seem to know that well themselves, and I believe they had something else in view. The weather was beautiful, and we soon left behind us the forests of masts which fill the port of Marseilles. The city suffered during the wars of the empire, but on the return of peace, it participated in its advantages, and its commerce is daily on the increase. We passed before Toulon, the isles of Hyères, Nice, and we arrived in thirty hours at Genoa.

Before I speak of Genoa, I must say a few words of Nice. This city, as well as Marseilles, was founded by the Phocians. Those successful navigators, seeing their colonies considerably increased, spread along the coast; and, having found an agreeable situation at the mouth of the Var, founded this city. The department of which it is the capital, although traversed by lofty mountains, furnishes wine, oil, and delicious fruits. Nice was once very populous, and, not long since, the ruins of its ancient suburbs might be seen. Although this city no longer enjoys the advantages it once derived from commerce, still

it possesses, in its situation, climate, and salubrious air, great attractions for invalids. The celebrated Cassini, the first astronomer of his age, was born at Nice. At the age of twenty-five, his fame had spread through Europe, and the senate of Bologna gave him a professorship, and lavished on him the honours which his industry and success so justly merited. Colbert envied Italy the possession of this treasure ; and Louis XIV. applied to Clement IX. and the senate of Bologna to permit him to dwell some years in France. This was granted ; and Cassini came to Paris in the beginning of the year 1669. The king received him with distinction, and assigned him a pension, proportioned to the sacrifices he had caused him to make ; and the Academy of Sciences, of which he already was a correspondent, received him among its members. The Pope and the Senate of Bologna urged his return in vain. Cassini married in Paris, and ended his days there. Fontenelle, in his *éloge* of this academician, says that he possessed an even tranquil disposition, which was free from inquietude, and assigns his religious sentiments as the source of this enviable calmness. “ A great fund of religion,” says he, “ and, what is more, the practice of his religious duties, powerfully contributed to produce and preserve his habitual tranquillity of mind. The heavens, which declare the glory of God, never announced it to any one with greater effect than to him.” I would wish to know if religion, and a compliance with its duties, are now frequently found in the eulogiums of the institute ?

Genoa, one of the principal cities of Italy, enjoys a favourable and beautiful situation. Rising in the form of an amphitheatre, on the declivity of a hill, it presents a most imposing aspect to those who approach it by sea. Its harbour is closed by two piers, which allow a passage to vessels. Although protected both by nature and by

art, it has been often taken ; and I believe there are few states in Europe which have passed through so many changes as Genoa. In 1805, it was incorporated with France; but was ceded by the Congress of Vienna, in 1815, to the Prince of Piedmont. Although it has lost the independence for which it paid so dearly, it has found, under the government of this prince, tranquillity, and consequently happiness.

The anchor was scarcely lowered into the waters, when the officers of health came on board to inspect the travellers, and ascertain their number. I was addressed by a Neapolitan cabin-boy, who cried out with all his strength: " Monsieur—come and get yourself counted; they wait for your number." I immediately presented myself. As the steamboat stops thirty hours at Genoa, the travellers disembark, present themselves to the police, and pay six francs for the signature of passports. Having complied with these formalities, they may visit the interior of the city.

Genoa the *Superb* is famed for the beauty of its palaces and the magnificence of its churches. The walls of the cathedral are encrusted with marble. The church of the Annunciation glitters with gold ; and that of St. Siro is scarcely inferior to it in riches or appearance. The palaces and churches possess some pictures and statuary by the great masters.

I wished to visit the hospitals, the arsenal, the palace where the Doge resided, and where the senate held its sessions ; but I had a paramount duty to perform. It was Sunday, and the traveller could not dispense with the sanctification of the Lord's day. I hastened, then, to the church of St. Siro, where I heard a sermon. Then was sung the litany of the Blessed Virgin ; and I felt inexpressible satisfaction in uniting my prayer with those of the people, and of mingling my voice with theirs, in

chaunting this hymn of praise, this homage to virtue. All were on their knees, in the most profound recollection, and I perceived no stir, except what was made by some mothers, who were making their children kneel, and who, pointing to the altar, gave them to understand, that the image on it was the representation of another, and still more loving mother.

Genoa has produced two illustrious seamen. Christopher Columbus and Andrea Doria. The latter, although less famous, was more fortunate than the former. His country appreciated his services, honoured him while living, and even styled him its Father and Deliverer. Having been commanded to clear the Mediterranean of pirates, he enriched himself with their spoils, purchased some galleys, and without emerging from the rank of a private citizen, he enjoyed the rank, and exercised the influence of a maritime power. Francis I. and Charles V. admired him, and contended for his alliance. Who has not heard of Columbus? At Genoa, the child learns to lisp his name before that of Alexander. It is with kingdoms as with individuals; there is a moment which decides their destinies, and which, if once passed, never returns. This extraordinary man loved his fellow citizens, and was anxious that they should enjoy the honour, and reap the fruits of his discoveries. The Genoese regarded his project as the dream of an enthusiast, and rejected it; and thus lost the opportunity of restoring their republic to its ancient splendour.

Isabella and Ferdinand had overcome the Moors, and were at the summit of their glory, when, after some hesitation, they resolved to confide three small vessels to Columbus, and soon learned that he had succeeded in his enterprise, and discovered a new world. He himself brought the news: he was received triumphantly, obtained the rank of a noble, and was named Great Admiral.

On a second expedition, on which he sailed with a fleet of seventeen vessels, he made new discoveries. The first joyous feelings which his success had excited soon subsided. The queen and especially the king, were naturally ungrateful and suspicious ; they were too ignorant and too much interested, to appreciate the glory of the discovery, and the perspective of a remote commerce. They listened to the suggestions of envy, and ascribed to the mal-administration of Columbus the little advantage they derived from these regions, which were said to abound in gold. Bovedilla, an avaricious and cruel man, was sent after him, with full power to examine the conduct of the admiral and replace him. Bovedilla was interested in finding Columbus guilty: he caused him to be dragged on board a vessel, and loaded with chains. Thus condemned without trial, and without a crime, or even the shadow of a crime, Columbus wrote to his sovereign a letter, which history has preserved, and which appears to me an exhaustless subject of meditation.

After having represented in a few words the importance of the countries which he had conquered for Castille, he speaks both of the evils which he suffers, and of those which impend over him. Deprived of every thing, he retains nothing but his chains ; and more generous than his enemies, he would wish to spare them the confusion of their ingratitude. " Alas !" says he, " these chains are now my only treasure ; and they shall be buried with me, if I enjoy the privilege of a grave. I wish that the memory of so unjust an action may die with me, and that, for the honour of Spain, it may be for ever forgotten. May future ages never know, that in this present one lived wretched creatures, who acquired merit with Ferdinand by destroying the unfortunate Columbus, who was guilty of no other crime than that of having bestowed a new world on Spain. It was thou, O Great God ! who didst inspire

me to design, and enable me to execute this enterprise. Have pity on me, and vouchsafe to favour this unhappy undertaking. Let the whole earth weep over me. And you, O angels and saints, who know my innocence, pardon the present age, which is too hardened, and too envious to compassionate my misfortune. Those who are to follow us will one day say, that Columbus, with his own fortune, at a little expense, and even without any expense to the crown, at the peril of his own life and that of his brother, in twenty years and four voyages, rendered more services to Spain than any prince or kingdom had ever received from any other man. They will add, that without being accused of the least crime, he was left to perish in misery and poverty ; every thing having been taken from him but his chains : and that he who gave a new world to Spain, found not, either in the old or new hemisphere, a cottage for himself and for his family.

“ But if Heaven still continues to afflict me, and seems dissatisfied with what I have accomplished, as if the discovery of this new world were to be fatal to the old one ; if, in punishment of my crimes, it will terminate my unhappy life, O you holy angels and saints, who succour the innocent and oppressed, transmit this paper to Queen Isabella. She knows how much I have suffered for her glory and her service ; and she will have justice and piety enough not to permit that the brother and children of a man, who conferred immense wealth on Spain, and added extensive regions and empires hitherto unknown to its territory, should be reduced to poverty, and look for alms. She will see, if she lives, that ingratitude and cruelty provoke the wrath of Heaven. The riches which I have discovered will call all men to partake of the rich booty, and will raise up avengers of my fate : and the nation will one day suffer for the crimes which malice, ingratitude, and envy now perpetrate.”

You will not be displeased with me for communicating this extract to you. How beautiful and touching it is ! It is, indeed, the cry of nature and the voice of truth. Had Columbus been guilty, he never could have addressed God with so much confidence, nor have written to his queen with such force. And yet, the misfortunes of Columbus are so far removed from us, and we have in our own days so many other injustices to deplore, that I would have abstained from transcribing this passage, had not the last lines appeared to me terrific. If you think otherwise, read them once more ; and listen to the prophetic voice which tells, that the children shall be punished for the iniquity of their fathers. Then cast your eyes on Spain, and ask the impious, if we are not to believe in an avenging God ?

Fifteen hours after our departure from Genoa, we arrived at Leghorn. The boat stopped there ten or twelve hours, during which the greater part of the travellers visited Pisa. As I had already been in that city, I remained on board, and occupied myself with writing letters. When we left Leghorn, I remained on deck, notwithstanding the bad weather, for I wished to cast a look on Elba as we passed. Soon did it appear, and with it a crowd of recollections. It is from this isle, thought I, that the lion of Corsica, after having burst his chain, rushed forward to reconquer an empire. Never did God give men a more terrific lesson, or show, in a more solemn manner, that he is the king of kings, or that he disposes, as he wills, of sceptres and of thrones.

A man presents himself, single-handed, to conquer France, and he succeeds, because God permits him. When he ascends the throne, and is encircled by his valiant warriors, God retires ; and the same man is seen, abandoned by all, and cast as a captive on a burning rock in the Atlantic, there to terminate his eventful life.

Bonaparte deluged Europe with blood, and caused tears to flow in streams. He was the scourge of his epoch. As far as lay in me, I opposed him ; I defended my country, and in this I did nothing but what duty exacted from me. What right, then, had he to cast me into a dungeon at Vincennes? At the thought of this I began to feel indignant ; but when I recollected that had it not been for that captivity, I might have continued to be of the number of those who think not of eternity, I admired the ways of Providence, and respected, in the fallen emperor, the instrument of God's mercy towards me. From respect I passed to gratitude, and when Elba receded from my view, I uncovered my head, and raised my eyes in prayer for the departed prisoner of St. Helena.

Manzoni has composed an ode on the death of this extraordinary man. It is called *Il cinque Maggio*, and is admired by all Italy. This production of one of the greatest writers of the Peninsula, is remarkable, because the poet had never flattered Napoleon in the sunny days of his prosperity, and did not bow the knee to him, like so many others who afterwards abused his memory. Napoleon, when abandoned by all, received the praises of a man who owed nothing to him. What is the cause? Manzoni is a fervent Christian, and he had charity enough to believe, that Napoleon returned to religion at the hour of his death.

I was much fatigued when I arrived at Civita Vecchia. I had a letter to our Austrian consul, M. Palomba Caracciolo, whose courtesies and attention I can never forget.

He delivered me a *lascia passare*, which a Roman prelate had sent him for me, that I might thus escape the annoyance of the custom-house officers, who are a perfect plague to travellers.

Civita Vecchia is a small sea-port, which owes its origin and harbour to the emperor Trajan, and its fortifications to Urban VIII. The city is tolerably well built, but as the water is excessively bad, and the air, during summer, unwholesome, it is not very populous. It is, however, an episcopal see, the residence of a governor, and has, moreover, a subordinate tribunal. There is an arsenal here : and here also are, ordinarily, the galleys of the Pope.

Behold me, at length, in the States of the Church—in this land which has so frequently been represented as the asylum of ignorance, and the focus of superstition ! Had Christian travellers given this description of it, I would weep over the destiny of man, and inquire how it came to pass, that the light of science and the love of truth became extinct in a country where so much has been done to keep both alive ? But I have remarked that those who are pleased to depict the States of the Church in such gloomy colours, belong to that class of travellers who view every thing through the jaundiced eye of prejudice, and against whose sarcasms I have been therefore on my guard. These writers are not incapable of seeing things as they really exist, or of rendering themselves agreeable by describing them as they are. Still, they wilfully close their eyes to the truth, and deceive themselves first, and then their readers. This is the spirit of the sect of *soi-disant* philosophers. “Let us tell as many lies as possible,” said one of their great men, “some of them will be believed.” It is not, then, philanthropy that has armed them against the States of the Church. Their sovereign is the vicar of Jesus Christ ; and as they love not Jesus Christ, they cannot bear him who is his representative on earth. They decry the clergy, because they do not like religion ; it is Catholicism they

attack, in the person of the Roman pontiff. Let us not be troubled at their efforts; the calumnies of the impious are the eulogiums of the just.

Do not, however, conclude, from what I have said, that I am likely to fall into the opposite extreme; and that, influenced by a blind zeal, I intend to be the panegyrist of what I shall describe. Although most devoted to the Holy See, and prepared to sacrifice even my life in its defence, nothing shall make me betray the truth; no one will ever be able to reproach me with having praised what I ought to have blamed. I know that God, who has promised infallibility to his church, has not, therefore, promised it to all those who belong to it. It is then perfectly allowable to point out an abuse, to censure a fault; but I cannot endure those writers who, under the specious pretext of enlightening the world, infect society with a mortal poison, corrupt its different classes, and then declaim against the vices which never would have existed but for the publication of their insidious writings.

If there be one good sentiment which ought to predominate in our breasts, it is the love of our neighbour; and hence it is that you will not meet with any one, who does not affect to feel for the sufferings of his fellow creatures. This sensibility is not always real; it is frequently an empty sound. When uttered by an enemy, it may become the watchword of hate.

M. de la Mennais, in his work *Les Affaires de Rome*, expresses great sympathy for the condition of "some poor prisoners, whom he met conducted by the pope's soldiers, chained two by two. The appearance of many of them," says he, "rather announced suffering than crime. All pressed around me, and with out-stretched hands, in a piteous tone, begged some *bajochi* for charity." After reading this relation, I was curious to become acquainted

with the regime of the prisons in the ecclesiastical states, and I profited by the favourable opportunity now afforded. I accordingly visited them, and it is only after having seen and examined them; after reading the registers and questioning the prisoners, that I derived the following result:—

The galley-slaves are well clad; they have two complete suits of clothes, one for summer, and another for winter. They get each day for dinner, two and a half pounds of white bread, six ounces of beef, or eight ounces of mutton, sixteen ounces, that is nearly a bottle, of wine, together with an excellent soup, well prepared. On days of abstinence, the meat is replaced by five ounces of fish and three eggs, or three ounces of cheese. At supper every evening they are allowed nine ounces of bread, a half-bottle of wine, and a good salad.

Many hundreds of the galley-slaves are employed in a cotton factory established in the neighbourhood of the prison; others work in the salt-pits, where they are occupied in the construction of hydraulic machines for the government. They are paid from eight to twelve bajochi* a day, and the government gives them a partial remission of their punishment, by reckoning sixteen for every twelve months of actual confinement. Some of them continue to employ themselves at their respective trades, as shoemakers or tailors; and some are employed in discharging the cargoes of ships, or other such confidential offices. The money earned by the galley-slaves is divided into three equal parts. The first is for the government, the second is given to themselves, and the third part is retained for them, until the term of their confinement shall have expired. By this prudent regulation, the government provides for their future wants,

* A bajocco equals a cent.

and takes care that, on being liberated, they should not be exposed to the temptation of committing new crimes, by finding themselves without resources.

You may easily believe that a government so attentive to the temporal wants of the prisoners, is not unmindful of their spiritual necessities. In the prison are five Capuchins devoted to their service, and who have the consolation to regain many of them to virtue. You will infer from these details, that in no country in the world is charity towards the culprit exercised in a higher degree. I am rather inclined to think that it is carried too far, and that prisons regulated with such indulgence do not inspire that salutary fear, which is alone able to arrest the arm of the wretch who finds himself without talents or industry, and who disregards honour and liberty. The following instance might be cited as a confirmation of this opinion. Some months since, a prisoner was told that, as the time of his confinement would soon expire, he must prepare to quit the galleys. His consternation was great. He addressed to the pope petition after petition, that he might be permitted to end his days in the prison. The answer had not been received, when the story was related to me.

In 1823, the ecclesiastical state was infested by assassins and robbers. Their leader was one Gasperone, who, with his brother-in-law, a brutal and ferocious man, called, for his atrocious cruelty, the "Executioner," spread every where terror and alarm. Lurking in the forests or the mountain caves, Gasperone transferred himself from place to place with inconceivable rapidity: he was everywhere, and could no where be found. Great rewards were promised to whoever would deliver him up dead or alive: the army was sent out against him; all without effect, no one could take him. Who would have dared to manifest hostile feelings against him? Gasperone had

his spies ; and wo to any one who incurred his suspicion ! The vengeance which his brother-in-law was wont to inflict, often against the will of the leader, was prompt and terrible. The cruelty of the " Executioner " resembled that of the tiger ; he shed blood for the pleasure of seeing it flow. A wedding was being celebrated in a village : the two families are assembled round the festive board, when suddenly cries are heard ; the bandits surround the house, and Gasperone, followed by many of his brigands, rushes into the hall. A struggle ensues ; blood is shed ; his brother-in-law seizes on the young bride, and drags her away to his den, declaring to her weeping relatives, that he will not give her up for less than two thousand dollars ransom. Two thousand dollars ! What a sum for these poor villagers. They were, however, procured, and handed to him. With one hand he receives them, and with the other throws to them a sack, in which was——the bleeding head of the unhappy bride !

Heaven at length took pity on a country which this monster ravaged. Being surrounded on all sides, and having lost many of its members, this band of brigands saw themselves forced to capitulate, and gave themselves up on condition of having their lives spared. Gasperone's brother-in-law is dead ; he himself is in the galleys of this city, where he is confined with some of his accomplices. I had the curiosity to see him ; I approached his cell with a feeling of inexpressible horror. I had imagined to myself one of these brigands, with a fiery eye, a proud gait, menacing gesture, dark and bushy hair ; such in fine as they are represented in romances. What was my astonishment to see issue from the door, at which I was told he would come out, a man between sixty and seventy years old, of a high stature, with a timid eye and hesitating gait. He had on a short coat

and pantaloons, with coarse stockings; he wore on his head a grey cap terminating in a conical point, and was very tranquilly knitting a stocking! This was Gasperone, a short time since the terror of Italy.

I was told that he had formerly saved an Austrian officer. I took this pretext to give him an alms; and then hastily retired, not wishing to inhale the same air.

Adieu, dear friend.

LETTER VIII.

Departure from Civita-Vecchia—Monteroni—Cupola of St. Peter's Church—Approach to Rome.

Rome, 10th of January, 1838.

My dear Charles, I left Civita-Vecchia early in the morning, in a carriage drawn by three good horses. It was very cold. On the right I had the sea, which I coasted for some hours; and on the left, the uncultivated Campagna.* The road is good; it is the ancient Via Aurelia, which was restored in 1565, by Pius IV. From Civita-Vecchia to Rome is about forty-eight miles. We

* "The desolate appearance of the Campagna is indignantly pointed at by several modern tourists as the natural result of Pontifical tyranny! Did not their prejudice, however, blind them to the truth, they might learn from Pliny, that while Paganism was still fostered by the imperial rulers of Rome, Latium with its fifty cities had almost become a noxious wilderness—from Lucan, that even in his days, the 'Rus Vacuum' might frequently be met with wherein no body would willingly pass the night; and from Tacitus, that the Vatican, which in his time was not comprised within the city walls, was branded with infamy on account of the notoriously bad quality of the air."—*Reminiscences of Rome, by a Member of the Arcadian Academy.* London, 1838, p. 20.—See note on the same subject at the end of this letter.

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changed horses at Monteroni, which is but a stage for the posts, in which however there is an inn, or, if you prefer the title, a coffee-house. They invited me to breakfast, which I refused; because my postilion had so many acquaintances, and pressed me so strongly, that I suspected I should have had to pay for the refecton of the entire group. The innkeeper, another interested party, stood respectfully at a distance, with his head uncovered. His silence was eloquent; but soon perceiving that I was inexorable, he placed his cap on his head, and muttering something to himself, retired.

Twelve miles from Rome, I began to perceive the cross on the cupola of St. Peter, and soon the cupola itself, rising majestically to the skies, appeared. This object is the first which presents itself, by whatever road you approach Rome. It towers over all the other buildings, like Notre Dame at Paris; but the effect produced by the cupola of St. Peter is much more striking, since it is twice as high as the towers of Notre Dame.*

No traveller, I think, ever approached Rome without experiencing strong emotions. Who could be so dull, so estranged from the elements of religion, and the first principles of literature, as to press with a calm foot, either the ashes of the first martyrs, or the cradle of those

* "At the distance of twenty miles, when viewed from any of the Latian or Sabine mountains, its cross-surmounted dome is seen towering in isolated majesty above the wide spread city of the seven hills. The believer and the infidel, the Christian and the Jew, gaze upon it—if not with equal respect, at least with equal admiration; for the former feel within it the presence of the Deity, and the latter acknowledge that a nobler substitute for the fallen temple of Jerusalem has never yet been raised to the God of Israel. Gibbon and Forsyth, De Lalande and Stolberg, are enthusiastic in its praise. The faculties of Byron's vast and capacious mind used to become enlarged in contemplating this stupendous edifice; and the sceptical Dupaty confessed that a visit to St. Peter's Church sufficed to fix his thoughts on God and eternity."
—*Reminiscences*, p. 125.

men, whose virtues and works, notwithstanding the lapse of ages, are the subject of our admiration? The impression made on us by the sight of these places, depends much on the liveness of our faith, and the extent of our knowledge; and must vary according to the motives, which have brought us to Rome, or the dispositions with which we visit it. When I approached Jerusalem, I could not repress a certain feeling of terror; every thing recalled to my afflicted mind, the sufferings and death of my Saviour-God; and when I entered that city of malediction, I was influenced by this sole thought, and only beheld the instruments of his punishment—the crown of thorns, the nails, the cross, the Calvary where he expired, and the tomb in which he was buried.

On the road to Bethlehem, I experienced very different feelings; it seemed as if an angel said to me, as formerly to the shepherds, "Fear not." Like them, I conceived great joy, and this joy was redoubled, when, on arriving at the sacred grotto, I saw the place where my Saviour was born, where the shepherds came to adore him, and where Mary exercised towards him the tender duties of a mother. Thus, in these two cities, if I may judge of them by what I myself experienced, the Christian receives at first a strong impression, and this impression allows him to indulge only in one sentiment, to entertain but one thought. It is not so with Rome. When we approach this queen of the world, we are overwhelmed with a multitude of thoughts; our recollections revive, and the ages to which we revert, the revolutions which have occurred, divide our soul, and excite all its faculties. What city has ever produced so many great men? What soil has ever drunk so much blood? What country has been desolated by such disasters, or sanctified by so many virtues?

When I visited Rome in my youth, I was full of enthu-

siasm for arms and literature, and eagerly hastened to that capitol, which the Scipios and the Cæsars had ascended with so much military pomp. From the capitol I descended to the forum, where Cicero disconcerted Cataline, and won the golden title of "Father of his country." From the forum I flew to the Pantheon; from the Pantheon to the Coliseum; thence to the Arch of Titus; and, afterwards, hurried to admire the Apollo of Belvidere, the Laocoon, and the other master pieces of art, which have escaped the scythe of Time, and the axe of the barbarian. In looking on these monuments, the annals of Rome laid themselves open to me, and I imagined that I was surrounded by all the greatness which it had produced. This impression was profound, but not lasting; because it acted more on my mind than on my heart. At the present day, when age and reflection have chastened my imagination and enlivened my faith, pagan Rome does not so much interest me. If I remember that she subdued the nations of the earth, I remember, at the same time, that she adopted their errors, that she was the centre of idolatry, and that she owes the universal empire, after which she thirsted, and which her oracles promised her, to Christianity. When she became the sanctuary of truth, she ceased to aspire after any conquests but those of souls, and to make use of other arms than the light of the Gospel and the folly of the cross. It is, then, the capital of the Christian world which I have now come to visit; the monuments of religion alone interest my curiosity and awake my feelings. Do not think that those objects excite little interest here. However just may be the reproaches which are made to our age, and however violent may be the invectives of heresy, a great number of pilgrims still come to pray at the tomb of the apostles—to render homage to the Holy See, and implore the benediction of the vicar of Jesus Christ.

After this declaration, you will not expect to receive from me a regular series of letters. The duties of my state, visits of courtesy, and a multitude of affairs, will not permit me to preserve that order, which you will find in the descriptions of other travellers. Moreover, I am not one of that numerous tribe, who have no other object in visiting Rome than to inspect the public buildings, and examine the statues and the paintings. They issue forth, in the morning, with a *guide-book* in their hand, and a *cicerone* by their side, and, in the evening, reduce to order the observations they have made, and the measurements they have taken. My journey from La Trappe to Rome has not been undertaken with the view of giving you a description of a city so frequently described. I will, however, describe it, because I am here. Thus you will lose nothing, provided you arm yourself with patience, and pardon me some mistakes, and some peculiar ideas, in which you will easily recognize my character. This I expect from your friendship.

NOTE.—In the London Foreign Quarterly Review, for April, 1833, the following explanation is given of the desolation, which, for several miles before the traveller approaches Rome, fills him at once with wonder and regret.

“Whence and how did the depopulation of the Campagna proceed?——

“—— In the fifth century, Rome, by the taking of the Vulsinii, and the overthrow of the Etruscan and Umbrian confederacy, forced a passage towards North Italy; whilst in the south, she conquered Sicily from the Carthaginians. Then the male population of Rome became engaged in distant wars, and the cultivation of the country was abandoned to slaves; the patricians, the successful generals and the enriched proconsuls, having

accumulated property in large masses, turned fields into large parks and pasture grounds. The soil, given up to spontaneous vegetation, developed and increased deleterious emanations; the Pontine marshes and other lowlands, the towns of which had been ruined by the Romans, became overflowed through the neglect of the drains, and we begin to find the unhealthiness of particular spots mentioned by writers. Strabo designates as such Ardea, Selia, Auxur, and Circeii; Cicero complains of the fevers that afflicted the plains of Rome. Livy speaks of the Roman soldiers encamped on the pestilential barren grounds outside of the town, and Horace says of the month of August, '*adducit febres, testamenta que resignat.*' ('It brings on fevers, and unseals wills.') The civil wars and proscriptions of Marius and Sylla, and of the triumvirates, must have greatly contributed to this, by reducing the population with frightful rapidity. Towns disappeared; the fields of Latium and Etruria were left to slaves and soldiers, whilst the people of Rome were supplied with distributions of corn from the granaries of Africa and Sicily.

"Whatever may be the deficiencies of the Papal administration, whatever we may think of the energies of the inhabitants, the extent of the unhealthy *maremme* (marshes) is not confined to the Papal states: the malaria does not stop either northward on the Tuscan frontiers, nor southward on those of Naples. The fiend carries his devastations over the territories of half a dozen governments and principalities, from the Riviera of Genoa to the southern coast of Sicily. The government of Tuscany, for more than half a century past, has been confessedly the best in Italy, and especially prone to encourage agriculture, having freed it from the trammels of restrictions. The Tuscan people, too, are industrious and intelligent in their agricultural labours; there is no want of enter-

prise and capital among the proprietors; and yet the *maremme* of Tuscany is as extensive, as solitary, as unwholesome, as that of Rome."

LETTER IX.

Arrival in Rome—Visit to St. Peter's Church—The Tiber—Santa Madalena—Visit to the Cardinals de Gregorio and Lambruschini—Audience with His Holiness—Gregory XVI.

Rome, 22d of January, 1838.

I ENTERED Rome by the gate *Cavalligiera*. I had requested a prelate of my acquaintance to procure me lodging in a monastery, but this had not yet been accomplished, and I was obliged to stop at a hotel, and retain my secular dress, which I was impatient to put off. As soon as I had taken possession of my apartment, I repaired to St. Peter's. Prostrate before the tomb of the apostles, which, night and day, is illuminated by a hundred lamps, I returned thanks to God for my safe arrival, and recommended myself to the protection of St. Peter and St. Paul: I prayed that during my residence in Rome, I might do nothing displeasing to God. I remembered also my country, and all that are dear to my heart. Need I say, that I did not forget you, my dear Charles?

Although I have travelled over a quarter of the globe, and sought after all that nature or art has made worthy of observation, I was struck with admiration on entering this edifice, the most beautiful and the most sublime, not only in Rome, but in the world. I had not, indeed, come this time to admire it, and as soon as my prayers were finished, I departed; but I will frequently return, for

the oftener it is seen, the greater impression it makes. I will frequently speak to you of it in the course of these letters.

Nothing is more familiar to us than the origin of Rome. This city, so full of interest, whether we regard it as the capital of the ancient empire, or consider it as the central point of Catholicism, was founded by Romulus, seven hundred and fifty-three years before Jesus Christ. It was increased by Servius Tullius, demolished by the Gauls, restored by Camillus, and subsequently embellished by Augustus, who, when dying, boasted that he had found Rome a city of bricks and left it one of marble. Under Nero Rome was destroyed by a fire, which the emperor himself is said to have excited, that he might enjoy a lively representation of the burning of Troy. Whatever truth be in this, he at least made use of the ruins of the city to display his magnificence. He built some palaces and porticoes at his own expense, and the city was restored. Since his reign Rome has been taken and sacked seven different times. At present it is environed by walls, which are flanked with towers; it has a circumference of sixteen Roman miles,* and contains, in this vast space, only 160,000 inhabitants.

Some writers have asserted that, before the translation of the empire, Rome had fifty miles circumference, and many millions of inhabitants. This calculation is much exaggerated, and all that we can conclude from it is, that the environs of Rome were, at that time, densely inhabited. You will not be surprised that this is no longer the case, when you reflect that large cities always attract a numerous population. In modern Italy many cities have sprung up, which were either entirely unknown, or very insignificant, in the times of the empire. We constantly hear complaints on the subject of the diminished

* The Roman mile is somewhat less than the English one.—T.

population of this city, when, in fact, it has only extended and diffused itself over the same country, to cultivate all its parts, and promote commerce and industry.* After all, Rome, with its decreased population, is, nevertheless, the metropolis of the world, and the city most worthy of our curiosity, on account of its churches, its palaces, its places, its fountains, and, probably, by the remnants of its ancient splendour—its temples, its triumphal arches, its obelisks, its statues, its amphitheatres, its baths, its aqueducts, &c., &c. Rome, in a word, has no parallel.

The Tiber divides the city into two parts. Begging pardon of the classic writers, this river has but little of classic beauty or magnificence. It flows on in a narrow bed, as if it were almost afraid to appear; its banks are without quays, and have scarcely any landing places; its waters are always surcharged with a yellow slime, which is of a pernicious quality; and its fish is neither palatable nor wholesome. It debouches into the Mediterranean at two places. The branch which preserves the name of Tiber, was formerly the only one, and on its eastern bank was the city of *Ostia*; being, as it were, the *gate* through which the river passed to the sea, and that by which foreign vessels approached Rome. This city, which was formerly so famous, is at present almost entirely destroyed.

After some days I was fortunate enough to find a religious house, in which I was allowed an apartment. My present residence is at the convent of St. Maddalena, which is inhabited by religious men, who, to the usual three vows, add that of assisting the sick and infected. They are ever ready to fulfil this vow, at whatever hour of the day or night they may be called; and courageously expose their own lives for the salvation of their brethren. Their founder was St. Camillus of

* See note at the end of this letter.

Leuis; a true apostle of charity, a second Vincent of Paul. Their costume appears to me very beautiful; a soutane and mantle of black cloth, with a large red cross on the breast. Their house is large; the cloisters are superb, and the stairway is really magnificent. The church, which was built during the last century, is not large, but very beautiful; rather too much so. It is incrustated with precious marbles, and adorned with several statues and bas reliefs; not to speak of numerous frescoes and paintings. The organ of this church is esteemed the best in Rome, a circumstance that increases my satisfaction. Some of the brothers have charge of the gate, which is not indiscriminately opened, and which is closed at an early hour. Within it reigns regularity, and, consequently, holiness. Add to all these advantages, which I so highly esteem, that of having two cells, from which I can easily go to a room, that looks into the church. These two rooms face the vast and solitary court yard, where you hear nothing but the fall of a *jet d'eau*, and the sound of the clock. The *jet d'eau* and the clock invite me to meditation, and suggest salutary reflections to my mind. The one presents the vanity of those men, who, sustained by favour, rise, and for a while shine, then fall, and are lost among the crowd. The other tells, that the time which it measures is only given me, that I may prepare for that eternity which approaches, and on which I do not sufficiently reflect.*

As soon as I was lodged, I resumed my monastic dress, and began to pay my visits. The first was to his eminence Cardinal de Gregorio, who had been my fellow prisoner at Vincennes. He was delighted to see me. We had not met for twenty-four years. With

* 'This seems to be an allusion to another of our traveller's works, entitled, "*L'éternité s'avance, et nous n'y pensons pas.*"

the exception of his white hair I did not perceive any alteration in him; he possesses the same vivacity, the same amiableness, and the dignified and easy manners which characterised him in prison. He enjoys at Rome general esteem; all love and admire him.

I left him to visit Cardinal Lambruschini, who is at present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and who, for a long time, was Nunzio in France. I was anxious to form the acquaintance of this celebrated man, and excellent diplomatist, whose other great talents are accompanied by consummate prudence and decision when required; and who is distinguished for his profound knowledge of men and things. His Eminence is extremely amiable, and his manners are most attractive; his eye is full of intelligence, and he speaks French with much grace and facility. Unfortunately his health is weak; his loss would be a great calamity for the Holy See.*

His Holiness having appointed a day for my reception, I was conducted to the Vatican in the carriage of Cardinal Lambruschini, by Monsignore Viale, who has a post in the office of foreign affairs. Monsignore Viale was, for a long time, attached to the nunciature of Switzerland, where he left a great reputation for talent and integrity. He is now on the point of being named to the internunciature of Bavaria. When we arrived at the Vatican, we passed through the hall of guards and ushers into a saloon in which were several Superiors of religious orders, prelates, cardinals, as it was a council-day. Some of the cardinals, among whom were de Gregorio, Odescalchi, Sala, Polidori, &c., did me the honour of conversing with me.

The approach to His Holiness has something grand and imposing in it. Besides the numerous chamber-

* The Cardinals de Gregorio and Lambruschini have since died.

lains with their various and rich insignia of office—a short black coat, a golden collar, and white plumed hat—the noble guard* and many prelates are in attendance. The head chamberlain is also present with His Holiness on these occasions. This office is at present filled by Monsignore Massimo, who belongs to one of the most ancient families of Rome. His mother, who was a Saxon Princess, fell a victim to the cholera. The office of chamberlain is what the Romans call a *posta cardinalizia*, that is, one which leads to a cardinalship.

His Holiness received me with truly paternal kindness; he made me sit down and converse with him for three-quarters of an hour. When I rose to withdraw he bade me repeat my visit often. This was his expression; its sound still echoes in my heart.

Gregory XVI. is about seventy-three years old, although his appearance would not indicate more than sixty. His vigorous health promises him yet many years Pontificate. He is singularly gracious; his sweetness, not to say gaiety, of manner, tempers the impression, which the faithful Christian experiences on beholding the successor of St. Peter—the representative of Jesus Christ on earth. Equally distinguished for his theological acquirements, and his literary taste, he causes religion and the arts to flourish. The Christian finds in him a father; the artist a protector. In the most trying circumstances, he causes his prudence and firmness to be admired. Virtues, in appearance opposite to each other, are united so naturally in him, that he passes from one to the other without effort and without ostentation. He would sport with an infant, and, if it were necessary, leave him to go before Attila.

Before his exaltation to the Pontificate, Gregory

* The body-guards of the Pope are all of noble families; hence their name.

XVI. was of the order of Camaldoli, and he still continues to practise some of its austerities. Although his head is encircled with the triple crown, and his authority extends to all nations, he sleeps by the side of a magnificent bed, on a plain couch, on which there is nothing but a pallet. His manner of living is that of a private gentleman of small fortune. It is said, that when he was made Pope, his *maitre d'hôtel* came to ask him in what manner he wished his table to be served—"Do you think," answered the Pope, "that my stomach has changed?" One of his relatives, who was about to marry her daughter, wished to come to Rome to have the ceremony performed by His Holiness. "She has her parish priest; that is enough," was the Pope's reply.

A dignity of the order of Malta, worth five thousand dollars a year, having become vacant, a deputation waited on the Pope to obtain permission from him to present it to his nephew. "I accept it with pleasure," replied the Pope, "but only for Cardinal Odescalchi." Indeed, far from enriching his relatives, Gregory XVI. does not, probably, do enough for them. He is however famous for his holy prodigalities; but his people are his family; his children, the poor. The small sum he derives from the state never reaches the bottom of his purse; it is disbursed in various ways as soon as it is received.

Pontiff revered, the father of the poor,
 May angels hover round thy snow-white head!
 Thy days on earth should be prolonged to spread
 The love of God among the sons of men.

In my next letter I will give you some details on the dress of the Pope, on his court, and authority.

NOTE.—We again extract from the Foreign Quarterly

of April, 1833, on the subject of the population of Rome.

“ One question, however, we are enabled to set definitely at rest, and that is the supposed decrease of the population of Rome. That population has been rapidly increasing ever since the peace. Intolerable misery, brought on by violent convulsions and foreign invasion, and the dispersion of the government and court, did at various times fearfully reduce its numbers. The earliest census we possess since the fall of the western empire, after the ravages of the barbarians, and the subsequent attacks of Normans and Saracens, is that of 1198, under Innocent III.; the population was then only 35,000. The removal of the Pope to Avignon reduced it so low as 17,000. It was then indeed that some prophets of woe might have announced the approaching annihilation of the eternal city! Viterbo and Tivoli were then able to rival and cope with the former mistress of the world. The return of the Papal court from Avignon, in 1377, was followed by an increase, which continued till the time of Leo X., when we find the number 60,000. But the storming and pillage of Rome by Bourbon’s army in 1527, again reduced the population to 33,000. Afterwards it began to recover, especially under Sixtus V. who having cleared the country of banditti, and checked feudal oppression, by a severe but equal justice to all, restored confidence and security, encouraged industry, and deserved the title of ‘restorer of the public peace.’ Since his reign the population kept steadily increasing until the beginning of the last century, when it had risen to 138,000, having quadrupled in 150 years. In 1745 it was 145,000; in 1750, 157,000, and in 1775 it rose to 165,000, the highest point it ever reached in modern times. It was 164,586 in 1795, just previous to the first French revolutionary invasion. The calamities of the fol-

lowing years, the depreciation of the paper money which had been issued with prodigal improvidence by Pius VI. the unheard of exactions of the French Generals, by draining the treasury, the clergy, and nobility, of all their disposable wealth, produced a lamentable state of misery among the lower classes, which was further increased by the entrance of the French army in 1798, the violent removal of Pius VI., the dispersion of his court and clergy, the plunder and confiscation of public and private property, and the contributions and other charges imposed on the Roman republic by its French allies. To these may be added, revolts in the province or Campagna, and the devastations which followed, and in which several towns, as Terracina, Frosinone, Ferentino, Ronciglione, Viterbo, &c., were sacked and partly destroyed. In 1800 we find the population of Rome reduced to 153,000; and the consequences of these calamities continuing to operate gradually, but not less surely in the following years, it became in 1805 still further reduced to 135,000, *being a decrease of about 30,000, or nearly one-fifth, in the course of ten years, from 1795 to 1805.* At the latter period the Papal court had returned. Pius VII. filled the Pontifical throne; but the country was impoverished, the Papal State deprived of its northern provinces, the wounds inflicted in the preceding years were too deep to be healed, and confidence in the future was not restored. Then came the second French invasion in 1808, and another violent removal of the Papal court and clergy in 1809, when a number of families were deprived of their means of support; the public establishments and charities then became bankrupt, and 30,000 persons were placed on the poor lists by their respective parish priests, and reported to the French consulta or provisional government as requiring immediate assistance. No wonder if the

population continued to decrease; and we find it in 1810 stated at 123,000, being a farther falling off of 12,000, in five years since 1805. This was the true malaria that afflicted Rome! The restoration of Pius VII. and of the central government in 1814, soon produced its wonted effect on the population, which rose next year to 128,000; it increased to 135,000 in 1820, and in 1830 it amounted to 147,385. The census of 1831 gives 150,666."

Since the publication of the foregoing extract, the population of Rome has continued steadily to increase. According to a census, published in the "*Notizie del Giorno*," of Sept. 9th, 1836, the population was 153,678. Father Geramb states it at about 160,000. It is to be remarked that the Jews, who are very numerous at Rome, were not included in the census of 1836. This may account for the apparent discrepancy between the number in that census, and the assertion of our interesting traveller. We shall then conclude this long note in the words of the reviewer from whom we have extracted the principal part of it:

"The above authentic statements, we conceive, will set at rest the question about the pretended progressive decrease of the Roman population, and its causes. The populousness and comparative prosperity of modern Rome, have been ever closely dependant on the residence and independence of its government."

LETTER X.

Dress of the Pope—His court—His authority.

Rome, 30th of January, 1838.

IN the interior of his palace, the Pope wears a soutane of white cloth, and a rochet of fine linen : a mozetta of red velvet, lined with ermine, and a large cap of the same material and colour. His shoes are either of red cloth, with gold tissue, or of red morocco leather, according to the time of the year. The cross is embroidered in gold, on the middle of the upper part of the shoe. He always wears the same dress, except during Advent, Lent, and on fast days, when he puts on a soutane of white serge. From the Saturday of Holy Week to the following Saturday, he wears a mozetta and cap of white damask. When he goes out, he wears a stole.

The household of the Pope has the magnificence which becomes his rank as a sovereign prince. His dignity as head of the church is indicated by the cardinals, prelates, and other officers which form his court, and some of whom always accompany him in public. The cardinals are his counsellors; the regular ambassadors are called Nunzii, and the governors of provinces and extraordinary ambassadors, are styled "Legates." The councils in which questions regarding the church or the state are discussed, are called "Congregations." The tribunal *della rota*, is that in which the most important civil causes are decided, without appeal; and the Dataria, that whence bulls are issued. The term "Pope" was formerly common to all bishops, but is now confined to the successors of St. Peter; it is of Greek origin, and signifies "father." The *tiara*, which the Pope wears in

his coronation ceremony, resembles, somewhat, the head-dress of the Chaldeans, which was round, rising in a conical form, and encircled with a crown when worn by monarchs. Boniface VIII. added a second crown, to show the union of the spiritual and temporal powers; and in 1334, Benedict XII. added a third crown, to indicate the paternal power which should be united with those before named. This triple crown is, in reality, a crown of thorns; for this elevated station demands a reserve and self-abnegation, which its dignity scarcely compensates for. The Pope enjoys no public amusement; he eats always alone, and his table is served in the most simple manner. The morning is entirely spent in the divine service and the administration of the public affairs; and a visit to a church, or to an hospital, constitutes his only recreation. In a word, the practices of devotion, and the cares of government, fill up all the hours of the Pontiff's life. Are there many men who would submit to such a life, even at the recompense of a throne?

The custom of kissing the cross, embroidered on the Pope's shoe, is a consequence of his elevation above all other powers. The emperor Constantine kissed the foot of St. Sylvester; the emperor Justin I. that of Pope John. Justinian exhibited to Pope Constantine, and Charles V. to Clement VIII. the same mark of their subjection to him as head of the church. This homage is rendered to Jesus Christ in the person of his vicar; and this ceremony is observed by all kings and their ambassadors.

The cardinals are the most distinguished members of the Roman court; they form the ordinary council of the Pope, and are the depositaries and ministers of his authority. It belongs to them to elect the Pope, who must always be one of their own body; a privilege that gives them a preponderance above all that is not cardinal.

The word cardinal, in its original and natural sense,

expresses the idea of "first," "principal," or "most considerable." It is derived from the Latin word *cardo*, which signifies *hinge*, because it appears that all things of the same nature depend, and, as it were, turn, on the principal points. It is not, then, without reason that the priests, who compose the council of the sovereign Pontiff, have been always called cardinals. In the Vatican, is preserved a constitution of Pope John, which says that, as the Pope represents Moses, so the cardinals represent the seventy ancients, who, under the supreme power of the Hebrew legislator, took cognizance of, and decided the differences of the people.

The cardinals were not however always superior to the bishops ; but at the end of the eleventh century, the election of the Pope having been confined to them, they easily acquired pre-eminence, not only above bishops, but even above archbishops and patriarchs.

As the cardinals alone can elect the Pope, so the Pope is the only one that can create cardinals.

In the college of cardinals are seventy members : six cardinal bishops, fifty cardinal priests, and fourteen cardinal deacons.

The cardinals wear a red soutane ; except in certain penitential seasons of the year, when they are clad in violet. Innocent IV. at the council of Lyons, 1265, gave them the red hat, as a sign that they should be ready to shed their blood, for the service of God and the defence of the church. The most important stations in the Roman court are filled by cardinals : the others are occupied by prelates.

The cardinal *Camerlingo* is so called, because he has the administration of the goods of the *camera apostolica* ; it is he who is charged with the care of the finances. This is the most eminent dignity of the Roman court. The treasurer-general is subordinate to, but entirely in-

dependent of him. The cardinal secretary of state is at the head of the administration, and renders to the Pope an account of all affairs, whether ecclesiastical or civil. The cardinal of the *Dataria* presides over the nomination to benefices. He is so called, because, formerly, his principal duty was to put the *date* to the provisions for benefices. He is charged with the matrimonial dispensations, and with all that regards the *annates*, or first fruits. The cardinal vicar exercises in Rome the episcopal functions, *i.e.*, he administers confirmation and confers orders. The *consistory* is an assembly of the cardinals, held in the presence of the Pope. It is twofold: the extraordinary consistory, in which important questions are discussed, and to which only a few of the cardinals are summoned; and the ordinary one, held every two months, to deliberate on the favours or graces solicited from the Holy See. The Congregation of the Index has for its object the censure of books, which contain dangerous principles. It is composed of many cardinals, and several consulting divines, among whom is always the theologian, called the master of the sacred palace, who is the censor of the press. The *Index* is the catalogue of the books censured by this congregation. The first edition of it was published in 1559, under Paul IV. That published a few years since must be considerably increased, as, in the last century, an impious and audacious sect arose, which dignified its errors with the name of philosophy, and effected to possess universal knowledge. "Its partisans," said M. Séguier, "in 1770, have declared themselves to be the teachers of the human race. '*Liberty of thought*' is the motto they have adopted; and this watch-word has been repeated from one extremity of the earth to the other. With one hand they have undermined the throne, and with the other they have upturned the altar. Its proselytes have increased; its

maxims are universally diffused; and nations feel that their most ancient institutions begin to totter. Astonished to find the principles on which it is based called into question or denied, society has asked, how men could have become so different from what they had been."

My dear friend, what would this magistrate say, if he were to revisit this earth, and see that the revolution he predicted has been effected; that the philosophers have triumphed, for a moment, over the ancient faith, and have given the human mind new ideas on civil and religious institutions? Alas! the Congregation of the Index may, indeed, point out the books which blast the soul with a moral pestilence; but will that arrest the evil or remedy its results? In the year 1771, Pope Clement XIV., affrighted at the evils which threatened society, addressed a brief to the King of France, to engage him to employ his authority against the partisans of irreligion. How he himself must then have regretted that he had destroyed that celebrated society—the nursery of piety and learning—which was persecuted because it was the irreconcilable enemy of all errors, and by its matchless system of educating youth, extended the light of the age, while it at least weakened, if it did not entirely neutralize, its perversity.*

The other congregation of which I propose to speak, is that of *Rites*. It watches over the tradition of the church; regulates its feasts, and determines its ceremonies throughout the wide extent of Christendom. It is in this congregation that the Pope declares, that one, whose life has been distinguished by the practice of heroic virtues, and whose sanctity has been attested by some miracles, is worthy to be canonized—that is, solemnly

* The Society of Jesus, which was suppressed by Clement XIV. It was restored by Pius VII.

enrolled among the saints whom we may honour. Protestants amuse themselves by turning the canonization of saints into ridicule ; but few, if any of them, have ever heard of the long and rigorous examinations, which always precede so solemn and important an action. This tribunal has its judges, its officers, and notary ; it employs interpreters when there is question of acts written in foreign languages. When circumstances require it, it profits by the counsels of physicians, natural philosophers, and mathematicians. The maxim on which it proceeds is, that the facts must be proved with the same certainty, as if there were question of condemning a person accused of crimes. Suspicious or inconclusive evidence, such as would not justify the judge in pronouncing sentence of death, against a person accused of a capital crime, is rejected by this tribunal. The author of the *Life of St. Francis Regis*, relates on this subject the following anecdote, which he heard from a person of undoubted authority :—“ An English gentleman in Rome was expressing his preconceived notions on the subject to a Roman prelate, when the latter gave him a process, containing the proofs of several miracles, to read. The protestant read them with attention, and returning them, said, ‘ This is an unexceptionable manner of proving miracles. If all those which the Roman church receives were sustained by proofs equally satisfactory, we could not reasonably object to them, and would cease to make your miracles the subject of our railleries.’ ‘ Well,’ said the prelate, ‘ you must know that of all the miracles which appear to you so well proved, not one has been admitted by the Congregation of Rites, because not sustained by sufficient proof.’ The protestant, astonished at this reply, acknowledged that nothing but a blind prejudice could question the certainty of facts, ascertained by such a scrutiny, and confessed that he never imagined

that the Church of Rome went so far in the examination of miraculous events." Modern protestants have not the same frankness; besides this, when holiness is rare, we are less disposed to believe in and acknowledge its existence.

I have to say a few words about the tribunal of the *Rota* which is charged with the decision of the most important civil causes, either between subjects of the Pope, or between those of other states, who in some cases recur to the judgment of the Holy See. The auditors of the *Rota* have been so called, either because they sit at a *round* table, or because they succeed each other, in examining the causes to be tried. They are generally twelve, and in this number are one German, a Frenchman, two Spaniards. As the tribunal of the *Rota* is charged with the examination of causes brought before it from different nations, it is but proper that it should comprise judges of these different countries, and thus inspire more confidence in its decisions.

As this letter is already long, I will defer to the next post what I intend to say about the Roman state, and the double authority of the Roman pontiff.

LETTER XI.

Roman States—Double authority of the Roman Pontiff.

Rome, 6th of February, 1838.

THE government of the Roman states is monarchical, and the people are not on that account less happy. There is no monarchy more ancient, there is no sovereign who receives in his own kingdom such strong expressions of homage, or who is, even at present, so much respected in a great number of kingdoms. This is but right. He unites in his person both the royal and the sacerdotal character; and if, as a temporal prince, his power is bounded by the limits of his small territory, as Vicar of Jesus Christ, it extends to the whole world. Thus the Pope has two powers, the spiritual and the temporal. His temporal kingdom, situated in the centre of Italy, that is to say, in the richest and most agreeable part of this country, comprises thirteen provinces, to which must be added, the principality of Beneventum and the duchy of Porte Corvo, both included in the kingdom of Naples. This state is three hundred miles long by one hundred miles broad. It extends from sea to sea; from the port of Civita-Vecchia on the Mediterranean, to that of Ancona on the Adriatic Sea, and from the mouth of the Po to the Gulf of Terracina. The provinces near Rome are governed by the Pope himself; the more distant ones by legates or vice-legates; all enjoy a degree of happiness rarely found elsewhere.* I know no country where more

* "No people under heaven enjoy a more mild and paternal government than do the subjects of the Holy Father's temporal dominion. Their industry is free, their taxes are light: they have not, as has hap-

tranquillity prevails, and this tranquillity attests the respectful submission of the people for a government, which is solely guided by the principles of justice and of virtue. If the internal peace of the ecclesiastical states has been at times disturbed, these passing interruptions were caused by unavoidable contact with their neighbours, and they have never had for their object any change in the laws, in the religion, or the principles of the government. I repeat it: the causes of these troubles were extrinsic, while those which we find in other countries, proceed from the constitution of their governments, and especially from the variety of principles which are introduced into them. This assertion needs no proof. We have then reason to conclude, that the tranquillity which reigns in the states of the church, would be found also in other kingdoms, if men, returning to the principles of unity, would acknowledge in the Sovereign Pontiff the successor of St. Peter and the vicar of Jesus Christ.

It is not the vain discourses of men that we must regard; the voice of Jesus Christ is what alone we should listen to. This divine Saviour, speaking to Peter, said: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Sectaries vainly endeavour to elude the force of these words, which will always afford a triumph to the Roman Catholic, because they suffice to establish the authority of the Roman Pontiff. In fact, in the language of the Scripture, *the gates of hell* are the powers of hell,

opened to others, been mocked with the semblance of a constitution, which only shields the oppressor, whilst he scourges them at home, and calumniates them abroad. No; the mild and affectionate sway of the Holy See may, indeed, appear deficient in energy, but it is never even unkind."—*Description of the Ceremonies in Holy Week*, by the Right Rev. Dr. England, Bishop of Charleston.

and *the keys*, the symbol of authority and government. Jesus Christ always called his church the kingdom of heaven; but how was this kingdom of heaven to be governed after its king had ascended to heaven? Who will govern in his place until the consummation of ages, for such is to be the duration of this kingdom? St. Peter; for it is he to whom were given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. As he was to die, while the kingdom was to endure for ever, with St. Peter we must understand his successors. It is not my province to bring forward the passages of Scripture and the testimonies of tradition, which establish the authority of the Holy See. I will content myself with citing a fact of recent occurrence, which proves that God watches over his church, and which appropriately terminates my commentary on the text of St. Matthew.

In the commencement of the year 1799, the French occupied Italy. They had carried away Pius VI., an old man, on the verge of the grave. They had dispersed, through the various countries of Europe, the members of the sacred college, who could alone give him a legitimate successor. Being masters of the Vatican, the revolutionists hoped to divide the Catholic Church by the semblance of an election, for which every thing was prepared, and which would have extended throughout Europe the divisions that desolated France. But God did not forget his church. He prolonged the life of Pius VI., and while he deferred to give him the reward of his many virtues, he called forth from the north the liberators of the south. He chose to make the protector of the Greek, the defender of the Roman Church, and caused him to change the face of Italy, to remove all obstacles, and to prepare every thing for the holding of a regular conclave, which would not offer even a pretext for division. The allied armies spread themselves abroad through Italy; they

prepared the ways for the passage of the cardinals, and while all was disposed to facilitate the election of his successor, God called to himself that venerable personage, whose memory will endure as long as the religion of which he was the pontiff and the martyr. Venice became the asylum of the sacred college, whose members, having assembled there, gave to the church a chief capable of repairing its disasters. On the 18th March, 1800, their choice fell on Cardinal Chiaramonti, who, to honour the memory of his predecessor, took the name of Pius VII. No sooner was the Pope elected, than the hopes which had been inspired, by the partial success of the Russian arms, vanished, and the French, once more, gained the ascendancy.

Although the French revolution seemed to threaten the very existence of Christianity, it served, on the contrary, to manifest its power and its beauty. Another event, another scene of this grand drama, proves that the preservation of the temporal authority of the Pope enters into the designs of Providence. Give attention to the words of M. Haller :—"The bishops of Rome," says this jurist, "the successors of St. Peter, while they always enjoyed general esteem by their pontifical dignity, and were enriched with much territory, as well by the first Christian emperors, as by the liberality of the faithful, especially by Pepin and Charlemagne, gradually arrived at independence without having sought for it; or rather, they have been actually liberated and left to themselves by the tacit or formal renunciation of the emperors of Constantinople and kings of Germany, who could not, or would not, retain their authority in these countries; so that there is no throne more legitimately acquired than that of the Roman pontiffs. And is it not wonderful to behold the perpetuity of this see and its independence, amidst all the changes which have occurred in kingdoms,

and in so many other illustrious episcopal sees? The Popes have had more enemies than all the other bishops in the world, and they alone remain in possession of what belonged to them for the last ten centuries—they alone are neither subject to, nor salaried by others. Rome has been often taken and sacked, and yet she has always recovered her independence. In our days the territory of the Sovereign Pontiff was taken from him, and in appearance secularized, with as much injustice as the temporal possessions of the bishops of France, and especially of Germany, where many enjoyed almost an equal power, and afforded considerable advantages to the sovereign families, whereas the bishops of Rome are generally Italians. Nevertheless, in that celebrated council of Vienna, *where the protestant powers had the predominance*, and where the spirit of the age had, in other respects, but too much influence, not a single voice was raised to re-establish the other despoiled bishops in their temporal possessions, while *all concurred in agreeing to restore them to the sovereign Pontiff!* Let those who can, explain such things by the principles of prudence and human policy; it seems to me, that we must close our eyes to the light, not to see in it an invisible and divine protection. The philosophy of the age might have been contented to spare the branches in order to destroy the trunk; but thousands of branches have been lopped off, while the trunk was left to put forth new branches. The edifice of the church is re-constructed on the rock of St. Peter, and Rome is to-day, visibly the mother and the root of all other churches."

Acknowledge, my friend, that this passage is remarkable: it is delightful to find the enemies of the church engaged in strengthening it, and when we reflect that interest has always been the most powerful lure with which heresy seeks to gain the assistance of princes, we

will better comprehend the beautiful providence of God on this occasion, and we should gratefully thank him for this visible mark of protection afforded to his vicar. In fact, if the Popes were not independent, how could they exercise their spiritual authority? To know how necessary the first is for the security of the second, we need but bring to mind what happened in 356 to Pope Liberius; in 537 to Pope Silvester, and in 652 to Pope Martin. The first was sent into exile in Thrace for having anathematized Arianism; the second was massacred for having opposed Eutychianism; and the third, for his opposition to Monothelism, was carried off from Rome, and transported to Crimea, where he died of the injuries he suffered. These persecutions would not have taken place, had those holy Pontiffs possessed the temporal sovereignty which their successors at present enjoy. We will cite two authorities on this subject, whom our opponents will admit to be unexceptionable. Bossuet, in his *Defence of the Declaration of the French Clergy*, says, "We rejoice with the Holy See that the sovereignty of Rome, as well as its other possessions, have been granted to it, so that it can exercise with more liberty and security, its apostolic power in the church; and we pray unceasingly for the preservation of this dominion." "Since Europe," says Fleury, "has been divided among so many different independent princes, if the Pope were the subject of one of them, there would be reason to fear that the others would not regard him as common father of the faithful, and this would give rise to frequent schisms. We may then believe, that by a particular providence of God, the Pope is an independent prince, so that he cannot be easily oppressed by other sovereigns."

Thus, according to the Abbé Fleury and the Bishop of Meaux, the Pope stands in need of his temporal independence, to exercise the power of the keys in all its

plenitude. If he be deprived of it, he will with difficulty be able to bind and to loose ; he would almost cease to be Pope ; and then, as a celebrated writer, who once excited such brilliant expectations, well remarked in 1826 : “ Without the Pope there can be no church ; without the church, no Christianity—without Christianity, no religion, and consequently no society.” — Yes, dear Charles, Christianity is the most firm support of society. I could wish by this word to understand the Christian religion in general ; but it is easy to see, that this privilege is only found in the Catholic church, because she alone possesses unity, and wherever unity is wanting, separation, opposition, disorder, and anarchy, must abound. How could it be otherwise ? Man must have some faith, and faith supposes a docile submission of the intellect, to a being superior to ourselves by its nature or by its functions, according to the legitimate power which it exercises in our regard. Now in place of this docility, substitute private judgment with its pretensions, philosophy with its doubts, Protestantism with its incertitude, and we will behold the people abandoning their ancient faith, and deserting the principles on which their ancient government reposed. They will grow weary of obeying, because they have been taught to regard obedience as servitude, and will imagine that they are oppressed if they do not command. This spirit of independence, more or less developed, more or less favoured by circumstances, will manifest itself in open revolution, or will silently undermine the very foundations of society.

Who can prevent such great evils ? “ It is,” says the Abbé de la Mennais, “ the duty of the governing powers ; the future fate of nations and of rulers depends in great measure on themselves. Let them reflect on it seriously ; there is question of their very existence. What have they hitherto done, but conspire against themselves ?

Safety is not to be found where they have hitherto sought it. Let them, at length, understand that there are but two elements of power in modern society : a conservative element, of which Christianity is the principle, and the church the centre ; and a destructive element, which pervades all society, and threatens to destroy all — doctrines, institutions, and even power itself.

“ Most governments have placed themselves between these two powers, and have opposed both. They oppose the church, because they contend for a system of absolute independence, which, while it abolishes the principle of right, shakes sovereignty to its very foundation. They defend themselves, as best they can, with the police and army, against the insurrectionary faction, which turns against them their own principles.

“ If they do not abandon, and that quickly, this position, their ruin is certain ; for it is evident that no power can subsist except it be supported by the principles of society. Kings remain not long on their thrones, when they wish to remain there by their own power ; man never patiently submits to the yoke of his fellow man. Power must come from Him, who has said, ‘ *By me kings reign.*’ If the ruling powers do not co-operate with the church, we may predict with certainty, that not a throne will be left standing in Europe ! When the *blast of the tempest*, of which the spirit of God speaks, shall come, they will be *scattered as chaff and as dust*. The revolutionary party openly predict their fall ; and in this respect they are not mistaken—their prophecy will be verified.

“ But they are themselves stupidly mistaken, when they think of establishing other governments in place of those which they will have overtuned ; and hope to create a new state of society, or any thing enduring, with their destructive doctrines. Their only creation will be

anarchy, and the fruits they will produce, tears and blood."

What a beautiful extract ! How many truths it contains ! How many reflections it suggests ! We find in it the Abbé de la Mennais, who, since ———. But then he was orthodox.

Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER XII.

The Popes, protectors of civil liberty, patrons of the arts, and benefactors of the human race.

Rome, 8th of February, 1838.

ALTHOUGH the Sovereign Pontiffs have always been protectors of civil liberty, patrons of the arts, and benefactors of the human race, there are not wanting many unjust enough to accuse them of favouring despotism, and of grounding their authority on the ignorance of the multitude. I know not, my friend, what can have given rise to this accusation, for we need but open our eyes to see that the countries which have been separated from the church, and those in which Jesus Christ is yet unknown, languish under the yoke of despotism ; while Europe, which may be considered the seat of Christianity, is also that of liberty.

How has the gospel been able to restore man to his dignity, or, at least, diminish the evils to which he appeared condemned ! To answer this question we need but say, that under the gospel there is no law but that of charity, and that to comply with this precept, is to fulfil the whole law. Permit me, however, to make some

observations on the change it has produced in the minds of men.

When Jesus Christ appeared on earth, the rights of men were yet unknown ; instead of light, the philosophers had involved them in darkness. The two people, most distinguished for their civilization and wisdom, the Greeks and Romans, decreed that among men, some were born for liberty, others for slavery ; and that every thing was lawful against the Barbarians—that is, against all who were not Greeks and Romans. These odious maxims were sustained by force, and propagated by cupidity ; and hence the general prevalence of slavery, which encircled almost the whole earth, as in a net. In the single city of Athens there were 200,000 slaves, and only 20,000 citizens ; and Rome, under Tiberius, had still more to fear from the multitude of its slaves, while the number of freemen was daily declining. This disproportion was so great, that when it was proposed to assign a distinctive habit to the slaves, the senate opposed the proposition, fearing that they should thus better know their strength, and be incited to revolt, as had happened under the republic. A revolt could not have excited surprise, for the condition of these slaves was scarcely different from that of beasts of burden ; and we are horror-struck on reading how these unfortunate creatures were treated. Groaning under the yoke of a frightful oppression, they were never permitted to claim the rights of justice ; while, for the most trivial causes, they were exposed to the torture, and were either scourged with rods, or attached to a cross. Those who had the misfortune to be in a house, of which the master was assassinated, were all, whether innocent or guilty, condemned without mercy. This occurred under Nero. Pedanius, a man of consular dignity, had been murdered in his bed ; the number of his slaves was four hundred.

Some voices were raised in their defence ; their number, age, sex, and the undoubted innocence of many of them were pleaded in vain ; the law prevailed, and these four hundred victims were put to death. Such was, my dear friend, the common law of all nations, when the church taught men that they were all the children of the same father, the heirs of the same promise.

We see in the Epistles of St .Paul what was prescribed on this subject by the Gospel. "Let each one," says the Apostle, "remain in the state in which he has been called to the faith. — After baptism there is no longer Jew or Gentile, master or slave ; you are all one body in Jesus Christ. — Slaves, obey your temporal masters with fear and simplicity of heart, as serving God and not men ; —and you, masters, treat your slaves in like manner, remembering that you have in heaven a Lord, who is their master and yours, and that there is no acceptance of persons with Him."

The philosophers took no trouble to instruct the humbler classes of society, whom they despised too much to admit them to their schools. The apostles and their successors did not act so ; but, knowing that all souls are equally precious before God, they received all who manifested a willingness to profit by their instructions ; and, having imparted to them equal light, they admitted them to the participation of the same sacraments.

It was a sublime and consoling sight, to see united in the same assembly, the rich senator and the indigent plebeian, the centurion and the soldier, the master and the slave. The first fruit of such meetings was a union of heart among those who composed them. After assisting at the ceremonies, where they had broken the same bread, and participated in the same banquet of fraternal charity, what master could have indulged in acts of barbarous ferocity against those, whom birth or fortune had

subjected to him? Thus the wall of separation, which licentiousness had raised between the different orders of society, fell by degrees, and the spirit of religious equality was sufficiently strong in these new Christians to become, in some measure, an article of their creed. A martyr of illustrious family, on being asked by the judge, what was his condition, answered, that he was the servant of Jesus Christ; another hero of the faith, of servile extraction, replied, that he was a freed man of Christ; and a third, wishing to demonstrate the excellence of his religion, answered, that it commanded men to love one another.

What can we think of certain modern philosophers, who have asserted that there is not a single syllable in the Gospel in favour of that liberty for which man has been created, and that Christianity has in no wise contributed to the mitigation of slavery? These men blaspheme what they do not understand.

The church was not content with diminishing the evils — she wished to abolish the existence—of slavery. Some princes aided her in this respect, and being well aware that the gift of liberty would be most precious, when it would be consecrated by religion, they sanctioned the emancipation made in the presence of bishops, and enacted that baptism, which gave the slave the liberty of the children of God, should secure for him, at the same time, the advantages of civil independence.

In labouring for the emancipation of the slaves, the church could not but perceive that the masters had also their rights. These rights she respected; and one of the good works most common among the Christians of those times, was to purchase the liberty of their brethren. Many extended their heroic charity so far as to become slaves themselves, to procure liberty for others. The bishops did not think they could make a better use of

the revenues of their churches, than to consecrate them to this purpose; and the Popes exerted their zeal wherever their authority was acknowledged.

Need I bring to your mind what Gregory the Great, at the end of the sixth century, did for the English? He was as yet a deacon, when passing one day through the market-place of Rome, he saw some slaves of a remarkably fair and beautiful complexion, exposed for sale. He asked the owner of them from what country he had brought them? "From the island of Britain," answered the other, "where all the inhabitants are equally well made." "Are they Christians?" "No; they are still pagans." Then Gregory said, with a sigh, "What a pity that such fine men should be under the tyranny of the demon." He immediately went to Pope Benedict, and besought him to send missionaries to Britain. When placed himself on the throne of Peter, the multitude of his occupations did not make him neglect the conversion of the British; he sent to them forty missionaries, over whom he placed a holy monk, named Augustin. These apostolic men confirmed their preaching by numerous miracles and splendid virtues, and converted the King of Kent to Christianity. They instructed his people, brought them into the church, and thus prepared them to appreciate the advantages of civilization.

If we open the annals of the middle ages, we will find that the same truth has been exemplified in other people. It was the light of the Gospel that guided them into the path of happiness; it was by becoming Christians that they ceased to be barbarians. Nevertheless we must admit that even after the establishment of Christianity, the division of kingdoms among the members of the same dynasty, the want of fixed boundaries, and of accurately ascertained rights, gave occasion to incursions, in which the liberty of individuals was often compromised. The

more violence, however, that was offered to the rights of humanity, the more were efforts made by the bishops to defend them. They were seen to form a holy league, and, profiting by the sacred power given them by religion, they forbade, under the most terrific penalties, any attempt on the liberty of man. At length, in 1167, Pope Alexander III. in the third council of Lateran, entirely abolished slavery; and, by this law, entitled himself to the lasting gratitude of all men. The greater part of his successors have imitated him, as far as they could, by resisting the despotism of some sovereigns, by restoring an equilibrium of power, and diminishing the evils of the feudal system.

It would appear that God, wishing to endear the papal authority to men, made use of it to restore to them the inestimable gift of civil liberty, of which the corruption of paganism had deprived them.*

As it was naturally impossible to civilize men without instructing them, the city which was chosen to be the centre of Christianity was also made the depository of human learning. If then, amidst the darkness of ignorance, Italy preserved the sacred light of science—if she emitted a bright and steady flame; if finally she brought forth new master-pieces of religious art, it is to religion, it is to the Sovereign Pontiffs, that she owes this glory. The writers who distinguished themselves first after the revival of learning, were Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. These gifted men made their fellow citizens sensible of the value of the master-pieces left them by the age of Augustus; and while they created a taste for Roman literature, they excited a curiosity for that of Greece, which was its source. Thus the love of learning was already diffused in Italy at the commencement of the

* By apostolical letters, dated December, 1839, the present Pope, Gregory XVI. has condemned the slave trade in the strongest terms.

fifteenth century, before Constantinople was taken; when its learned men, affrighted by the desolation of that city, took refuge in the West. Many of those fugitives came to Rome, and enriched her with the literary treasures they had snatched from the ruin of their country.

Much time was, however, still required to release the human mind from the shackles wherewith ages of ignorance had bound it. First efforts are not always successful; but the day which began to dawn, shed a clearer and more diffused light, and finally shone out with meridian splendor, at the commencement of the sixteenth century, under the pontificate of Leo X.

This Pope, of the illustrious house of the Medici, was only thirty-six years old when raised to the chair of Peter. Confided, from his infancy, to the care of the most able masters of the time, he had enriched his mind with varied science. His court was the most brilliant in Europe: science and art were his guests, and true merit was sure to find there a flattering reception, and enjoy consideration, honour and reward. The *litterati* were the Pope's friends; he lived with them on terms of familiarity; his liberality animated their labours, which he appreciated with the judgment of an enlightened connoisseur. This love of the fine arts, these favors conferred on those who cultivated them, merited for him the honour of giving his name to the age in which he lived—an honour which, among the crowd of sovereigns that have reigned, three only enjoy with him: Alexander, Augustus, and Louis XIV.

The age of Leo X. appeared so beautiful to the Abbé Barthélemi, that he designed to make it the subject of his labour and the monument of his glory. I know not why he subsequently preferred that of Alexander. I am not sorry that we possess the "Travels of Anacharsis in Greece;" this work is very valuable, and I believe

it would unite all suffrages in its favour, were it not for some passages, which favour too much the errors of the time in which it was written. But had the author wished to bring another traveller into Christian Italy, the researches he would have been obliged to make on the inhabitants of Latium—his reflections on the influence of a religion which had changed the face of the earth—his description of pagan and Christian Rome—all this would have interested us as much as his remarks on the manners and customs of Greece; and we would have had no less pleasure in conversing with Michael Angelo, Raphael, Ariosto and Tasso, than we could have in renewing our acquaintance with Epaminondas, Aristotle and Philip, who, although farther removed from us, were, however better known.

Most of the successors of Leo X. have been animated by the same spirit. If it be true that to honour talent is the best means of exciting it, we owe to them a number of great men who were the lights of their age, and the benefactors of the human race. Where do we find a prince who recompensed learning with more munificence than Clement VIII. who raised Baronius, Bellarmin, D'Ossat and Du Perron to the cardinalship, and decreed the honours of a triumph to Tasso!

Was Gregory XIII. an enemy of learning—he, whose pontificate is ever memorable for the reformation of the calendar? By this reformation he served both astronomy and religion; and yet, such was the force of prejudice, that he had greater difficulty in causing it to be adopted by certain nations, than he had in effecting it by his mathematicians. The protestants rejected it, because it came from a Pope—as if a rational creature should refuse light, from whatever source it may emanate. The Russians continue to reject it, preferring, according to the remark of a judicious writer, to be at variance with the

heavens, rather than be in harmony with the Roman Church.

Were not all people embraced in the solicitude of that Gregory XV., who, in 1622, founded the college of the Propaganda, an institution whose beneficial effects extend to the most distant regions? When you come to Rome, fail not to visit this famous college. There you will see a library containing books in thirty-six different languages; a like number of printing presses employed in printing works to diffuse, in all nations under heaven, the knowledge of the true God. What will appear still more deserving of admiration, you will find there one hundred students, collected from the four quarters of the world, and destined to preach the Gospel in all the nations of which they speak the different languages.

This would be the place to speak of the academies which are found at Rome; but not possessing sufficient knowledge to appreciate them justly, and to give to each the meed of praise which it merits, I will content myself with saying, that there is no city where they are found in greater number. I do not hesitate to add that all the arts and sciences, all branches of human knowledge are cultivated here, and that many authors, who, in modern times, have acquired celebrity in other countries, owe most of their glory to the great men whom Italy produced in the ages which have preceded ours.

The ancient Romans, believing themselves destined to achieve the conquest of the world, loved nothing but arms and combats. Things are now changed, and the modern Romans confine all their ambition to cultivate the arts their ancestors neglected. They surpass all other people in this respect, and Rome is still the queen of nations; but it is no longer by arms—it is by intelligence that she extends her empire and governs the universe.

I will speak to you in my next letter of the principal basilicæ* of Rome. When you shall have seen the expense which the Popes have been at, in erecting new monuments and preserving old ones, you will have an additional proof of their protection of whatever relates to science and the arts.

Adieu, my dear Charles.

LETTER XIII.

St. Mary Major—St. Peter.

Rome, 28th of February, 1838.

To be able to describe Rome, it would be necessary to reside here many years—to have a variety of knowledge—to possess taste in an eminent degree—to be gifted, also with a lively imagination—to have a facility of communicating to others the sentiments which you feel, and then to compose many volumes.

Rome, as I have already remarked, has no equal.†

* The more distinguished churches of Rome are so called.

† If the ancient Romans surpassed every other nation in the grandeur and magnificence of their temples, dedicated to false divinities, the moderns yield to none of them in the number, richness and splendor of theirs, erected in honour of the true God. Rome is sometimes called "a city of palaces and churches." I have already visited about three hundred of the latter. In these venerable sanctuaries I have often observed a greater equality, and a more friendly intercourse between the rich and the poor, than is to be found in our country. If you enter a church, for instance, during the hours of solemn and public worship, you see no distinction of persons among the laity; and a prince, or princess, may not unfrequently be witnessed kneeling by the side of a mechanic or charwoman. A Roman congregation, in fine, is not like the disdainful assembly of those who meet in the fashionable chapels of some proud metropolis, to display their vanity in appropriated pews, formed to separate them from the indigent and the poor.—*Reminiscences of Rome*, London, 1838.

Think of a city with thirty-five gates, containing thirty basilicæ, two hundred churches, one hundred and fifty large chapels, like churches, fifty remarkable palaces, sixty ancient temples, twenty villas, sixteen triumphal arches, thirteen obelisks, brought from Egypt, a great number of museums, filled with statues, and a still greater number of galleries, containing several thousand paintings! How much beauty and genius are displayed in those monuments, those statues, those paintings! To give you even an imperfect idea of them would be impossible. After exhausting all the resources of language, all the expressions of admiration, my description would be always unequal to their merits. I have, however, this consolation, that for you as well as for me, Rome is less the sanctuary of the arts than that of religion. Encouraged by this consideration, it is principally in a religious point of view that I will consider the capital of the Christian world.

I design to give you, in this letter, a description of the four grand basilicæ: St. Peter's, St. John of Lateran's, St. Paul's, and St. Mary Major's. I will begin with the last. You may easily guess the reason of my preference: it bears the name of the Mother of God, and the Mother of God is our mother also.

A name too pure for mortal lips,
First borrow'd from the songs of heav'n,
Or language of the Seraphim:
It stirs the soul, yet soothes our fears.
Oh, Mary! who in joy or tears,
While onward o'er the surges driven,
Hath e'er, unaided, called on thee,
Thou star of life's tempestuous sea!
Sweet name of power and virgin love,
Fair as the spotless heavens above,
Bright as the wave beneath the sun,
Pure as the cloudless diamond.

In front of this church is a beautiful *piazza*, in the middle of which rises a magnificent column, one hundred and thirty feet high, surmounted by a statue of the Blessed Virgin, in gilt bronze. It is recorded, that in 353, under the pontificate of Liberius, a gentleman, called Patrizi, having seen snow fall here on the 5th of August, as was announced to him in a dream, by the Blessed Virgin, erected a small church, which, in memory of the miracle, was called *Our Lady of the Snow*. In 442, Pope Sextus III. rebuilt it, gave it its present extent, and deposited in it the crib in which our Saviour was laid, whence it derived the name of *St. Mary of the Crib*, which it subsequently exchanged for that of St. Mary Major, because it is the most beautiful church erected in honour of Mary.

There are some temples which inspire a certain terror, and in which we experience a feeling of dread, as if we were at the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge : but here the overpowering nature of this thought is moderated by all that is sweet and consoling in religion. It is the house of Mary, and it contains the crib of Jesus. The first thing I did on entering the church, was to prostrate myself before the chapel, where the crib is deposited. There I thought on Bethlehem. I brought to mind the days I had spent there; and I seemed, for an instant, to be transported to the place where Jesus was born—to that august grotto which I had so often watered with my tears. Yes, my friend, I wept anew ; but my tears were tears of joy. I felt myself happy. After indulging, for some time, in these delightful feelings, I reflected on myself—a profound sigh escaped my oppressed heart. It is, said I, six years since you impressed your lips, inflamed with gratitude and love, on the marble of the sanctuary of Bethlehem—six years! You knew that the Christian,

and especially the religious, should tend every day to perfection. You knew it. Cast a glance on the past; what progress have you made in this time? Are you better? I did not answer this question; I feared to be heard before the crib. I arose—striking my breast; my tears flowed in greater abundance, but they were no longer the same tears.

Under the portico of this church is a colossal statue in bronze, representing Philip III., King of Spain. The kings of Spain enjoy the title and the prerogatives of first canons of St. Mary Major. I know not whether Christina and Isabella are canonesses of it?

The church consists of three naves, which are sustained by thirty-six Ionic columns of white marble. The middle nave, more elevated than the side ones, is exceedingly rich and tasteful. It was gilt in the time of Alexander VI., with the first gold Ferdinand and Isabella received from America. How pleasing to behold sovereigns attribute their success to God, and, by consecrating to him the first fruits of their conquests, confess, that, although seated on the throne, they are, nevertheless, subject to his supreme power and authority.

The pontifical altar is isolated, as in the other basilicæ. It is placed under a canopy, which is sustained by four porphyry columns, and is formed of a great urn of the same material. This is said to have served as a tomb to the founder of the church. The lid of the urn is of black and white marble; it is sustained by four infants of gilt bronze, and forms the table of the altar.

Not far from this on either side are two superb chapels; in one of which, founded by Sixtus V., is found the magnificent mausoleum of this Pontiff. This consists of four columns of *verde antico*, that sustain a canopy, under which is placed the statue of the Pope, represented on

his knees. The figures of Charity and Justice, of St. Francis of Assise, and of St. Anthony of Padua, adorn this monument. Opposite is the tomb of St. Pius V., the urn of which is of *verde antico*, beautifully wrought. The holy sacrament is kept in this chapel in a magnificent tabernacle.

The opposite chapel is called the *Capella Borghese*, and is probably the richest in the world. Paul V., of the illustrious family of that name, is buried there, and is looked on as its founder. He probably only restored it, as Clement VIII. who died before him, is also buried there. Their tombs are ornamented with statues and bas-reliefs. The altar is extraordinarily rich; whatever the mind can conceive precious or rare is found in it. In the middle of a large ground-work of *lapis lazuli*, under a crown of diamonds, is the image of the Blessed Virgin, which is said to have been painted by St. Luke. The top of the altar is adorned with a bas-relief, representing the miraculous appearance of the snow, above referred to. Among the other tombs in this church are those of Nicholas IV., and Clement IX.

At the entrance of the sacristy is the baptistery, surrounded by a beautiful balustrade. The water of regeneration is received there in a large basin of porphyry, in the midst of which rises the statue of the holy precursor!

In speaking to you of the curiosities of this church, I must not forget the mosaic paintings which were placed here in the fifth century, by order of Sixtus III., and which are yet to be seen over the arch, separating the choir from the nave. This Pope caused a mosaic of the Blessed Virgin to be placed there, to render testimony to her dignity of Mother of God, after the general council of Ephesus had condemned the heresy of Nestorius.

This monument of Christian antiquity, which is little regarded by travellers, is, however, particularly interesting; because in the second Council of Nice, it was cited as a proof of the tradition of the church regarding the veneration of images.

St. Mary Major must be visited at Christmas in order to be seen to greatest advantage. On that day the lustre of the gold, with which perhaps it is overloaded, becomes more dazzling by the reflection of the lights, which are in great number; and before the crib, which is preserved in a reliquary of massive silver, and enclosed in crystal, so as to be seen without being touched, kings and shepherds—as formerly at Bethlehem—come to adore. I will make an observation well calculated to increase the Christian's respect for this church. The crib which is venerated here is the wood of the true crib; while Bethlehem only offers to the traveller the part of the grotto where this wood lay.

Some antiquarians assert that this church is on the site formerly occupied by the temple of Juno Lucina; and that the beautiful columns, with which the church is decorated, have been taken from that temple. Others combat this assertion. As for my part, Charles, I am not an antiquarian; I will not embarrass my mind with the controversy; but with eyes fixed on the crib, I find consolation in the sentiments with which it should inspire all Christians; and I laugh at Juno, Jupiter, and that multitude of gods and goddesses, who have been hurled from their Olympus, by a child born in the obscurity of a stable!

Let us now pass to the Church of St. Peter, and contemplate this edifice, to which none other can be compared for vastness of dimensions and harmony of proportions, the richness and elegance of its ornaments, and the

care and cleanliness with which they are preserved. It must be seen many times, and examined in detail, before the grandeur of the design, the boldness of the enterprise, and the perfection with which it has been executed, can be appreciated. Were there nothing else at Rome, it would be worth while to visit this city to see St. Peter's. Nothing of the kind can be seen either at Paris or at London. All the arts have contributed to embellish it; and the best artists have displayed their talents in it. It is the *chef d'œuvre* of Italy—it is the wonder of the world.

The Church of St. Peter is situated at the north-west extremity of Rome, at the foot of Mons. Vaticanus, near the site of the gardens of Nero. In the year 323, Constantine built upon this site a large church, in honour of the Prince of the Apostles. In the middle of the fifteenth century, this was considered to be in a dilapidated condition. Nicholas V. conceived the idea of rebuilding it—which glory, however, was reserved for one of his successors. Julius II. who was elected in 1503, was distinguished for his enterprising spirit. He wished to leave behind him a remarkable monument; and, after having consulted the most celebrated architects, he laid the first stone on the 18th of April, 1506.

The piazza before the church is worthy of the edifice to which it leads. It is adorned with a portico, four columns deep, which semicircularly opens out, on either side before the façade of the church, and gives it a breadth proportioned to its great depth. This beautiful colonnade forms a great covered gallery, surmounted by a balustrade on which are placed one hundred and thirty-six statues of martyrs, founders of religious orders, and at intervals the arms of the Sovereign Pontiffs under whom it was erected. Alexander VII. laid the first stone of this portico, on the 25th of August, 1661. It was built

on the plan, and under the inspection of Bernini. In the middle of the piazza is an obelisk, of one block of granite, seventy-four feet high, and which, with the pedestal it rests upon and the cross by which it is surmounted, rises to one hundred and twenty four feet from the ground. This obelisk is one of those attributed to Pheron, the son of Sesostris, who according to Herodotus, had consecrated two obelisks in the temple of the Sun. The Emperor Caligula brought it from Alexandria to Rome. The ship employed for this purpose was, according to Pliny, the most extraordinary that ever moved upon the waters, and was itself a real wonder. This obelisk remained standing in the circus of Nero, when Nicholas V. conceived the idea of transporting it to the piazza of St. Peter; but death prevented him from executing this project. Paul III. wished Michael Angelo Buonarrotti to undertake the task; but he declined, fearing that he should not be able to overcome the difficulties with which it was attended. Thirty years later, Sixtus V. ascended the Pontifical throne. Endowed with a firm and enterprising character—such as was required for the government of the church, then assailed by furious tempests—this Pontiff was, perhaps, not sorry to show the world that he was not to be retarded by obstacles deemed insurmountable by his predecessors. His first care was to make efforts to adorn the piazza of St. Peter with this monument. With this view, he invited to Rome many architects and machinists. They assembled from all Italy, and some even came from Greece. More than five hundred plans were presented, and a committee was named to examine them. After a long investigation, this committee adopted the plan of Dominico Fontana, reserving however the execution of it to two more aged, and therefore, more experienced architects. The Pope

thought this an injustice ; and rightly judging that the inventor of such a plan was most capable of executing it, he ordered him to undertake it, and vested him with extraordinary power.

The greatest difficulty arose from the size of the obelisk, which, according to the calculations of Fontana, weighs 963,537 Roman pounds. On the 15th of April, 1586, it was raised two palms ($17\frac{1}{2}$ inches) from its pedestal ; on the 7th of May it was lowered to the ground, and notwithstanding the short distance, four months were occupied in transporting it to the place where it was to be erected. Finally, on the 10th of September, by the aid of forty-four machines, moved by eight hundred men and one hundred and fifty horses, it was gradually raised, and placed perpendicularly on enormous bars of iron, which sustained it on its resting place. This was the work of five hours.

Immediately the firing of cannon and the ringing of bells announced a result so glorious for the architect, and so satisfactory to the Pontiff. It is, however, related that Fontana was mistaken in his calculation relative to the length of the ropes ; and that the obelisk would not have been raised, had not a sailor from San Remo, named Bresca, perceiving the defect, cried out, in defiance of the prohibition to speak under pain of death, "Wet the ropes:" and by this means apprised the architect of the defect, and pointed out its remedy. It is added, that to reward this brave man, he and his descendants were invested with the privilege of furnishing palms on palm Sunday to the Roman churches. "Perhaps," remarks the writer from whom I have borrowed this anecdote, "this is one of the thousand tales, by which mediocrity consoles itself for the success of superior talents." This fact, however, is represented in the frescoes of the Vati-

can library. On the 27th of the same month, the obelisk was blessed after a solemn procession, and on its summit was placed the sign of our redemption, as is the case with the other obelisks of Rome. The expenses incurred were 40,000 dollars.

The granite of which the obelisk is formed is a very hard stone, composed of black-spotted red stones. It was known to the ancients by the name of Sienite marble. "The kings,"—says Pliny, speaking of the Shepherd kings of Egypt,—“emulously employed Sienite marble to make a kind of beam, which they called obelisks, and which they consecrated to the Sun. Their form represents, in some manner, the rays of this luminary; and in the Egyptian language the word itself signifies a ray. They were introduced by Nuncoree, who reigned in the city of the Sun; he had received in a dream an order to make them, and had many imitators.” It is then probable, that these obelisks belong to the most remote antiquity. When the Roman Emperors became masters of Egypt, they transported several of them to Rome, to adorn its public piazzas, its circus, and the other places where they loved to display their magnificence. What is particularly remarkable in the obelisk, of which we have been speaking, as well as in two others, less considerable, which were formerly before the mausoleum of Augustus, and which are now—one behind St. Mary Major, the other at Monte Cavallo, is, that no hieroglyphics are found on them; while, according to Champollion, the monuments which were placed before temples had an historic character, and required an inscription.

The following inscriptions, having reference to the cross to which Sixtus V. consecrated this obelisk, were carved on it by his orders. At the top, opposite the church, is read:—

SANCTISSIMÆ CRUCI SACRAVIT SIXTUS V., PONT. MAX. E PRIORI SEDE
AVULSUM, ET CÆSARIBUS AUGUSTO ET TIBERIO ABLATUM.*

On the pedestal towards the east,—

ECCE CRUX DOMINI : FUGITE PARTES AVERSÆ : VICIT LEO DE TRIBU
JUDA.†

To the west,—

CHRISTUS VINCIT, CHRISTUS REGNAT, CHRISTUS IMPERAT, CHRISTUS AB
OMNI MALO PLEBEM SUAM DEFENDAT.‡

Towards the north,—

SIXTUS PONT. MAX. CRUCI INVICTÆ OBELISCUM VATICANUM AB IMPURA
SUPERSTITIONE EXPIATUM JUSTIUS ET FELICIUS CONSECRAVIT
ANNO MDLXXXVI. PONT. II.§

Towards the south,—

SIXTUS V., PONT. MAX. OBELISCUM VATICANUM AD APOSTOLORUM
LIMINA OPEROSO LABORE TRANSTULIT ANNO
MDLXXXVI. PONT. II.¶

At the bottom, in memory of the architect,—

DOMINICUS FONTANA EX PAGO MILI AGRI NOVOCOMIENSIS TRANS
TULIT ET EREXIT.¶

At an equal distance, on each side of the obelisk, are two fountains, which cast up their waters from a double basin of granite. They produce a fine effect, and con-

* Sixtus V., Sovereign Pontiff, consecrated to the holy Cross this obelisk, removed from its original site under the emperors Cæsar Augustus and Tiberius.

† Behold the Cross of the Lord : fly ye enemies : the Lion of the tribe of Juda has overcome.

‡ Christ triumphs, Christ reigns, Christ governs ; may Christ defend his people from all evil.

§ Sixtus, Sovereign Pontiff, after having purified the obelisk of the Vatican from the superstition which had defiled it, consecrated it justly and happily to the invincible cross, in the year 1586, the second of his pontificate.

¶ Sixtus V., Sovereign Pontiff, with great labour transported the Vatican obelisk to the threshold of the Apostles, in the year 1586, the second of his pontificate.

¶ Dominic Fontana, of Mili, in the territory of Como, transferred and erected it.

tribute much to the ornament of the *piazza*, by the quantity of water they uninterruptedly spout up to such a height, that they form, in rising, a thick and white sheaf, which dissolves in spray in the descent. The first time that Christina of Sweden saw this spectacle, she was struck with it; and, thinking that it was exhibited on her account, she thanked the attendants, by whom she was accompanied, and told them to stop the waters. What was her surprise on being told that they had not ceased to play thus for a century! The water comes from a distance of twenty-four miles; it rises to an elevation of about twenty-two feet, and the basin into which it falls is eighty-six feet in circumference. This water would move large mills.

If the *piazza* of St. Peter delights the lovers of art, by the beauties it presents to their admiration, it no less captivates the faithful Christian, by the recollections it suggests. Here was the circus of Nero; it was the theatre of his madness, where he glutted himself with the torments and carnage of the Christians. Fire having consumed almost the entire city of Rome, in his reign, it was thought that Nero himself was the author of the conflagration. Wishing to silence the seditious rumours, which were in circulation against him, and to give the public hatred another direction, he accused the Christians of the crime, and ordered them to be persecuted. Not satisfied with the ordinary punishments, he invented others before unheard of, and surpassed even himself in cruelty. Many Christians were enclosed in the skins of wild animals, and devoured as such by dogs. Others were besmeared with pitch, and impaled on stakes; fire was applied, and by the light of those horrible torches, the emperor was accustomed to walk by night in his gardens, drive his chariot, and sing verses, unmoved by the cries of

his expiring victims. It was in this persecution that St. Peter and St. Paul terminated their lives by martyrdom. For eighteen centuries have the faithful come here, from all parts of the world, to venerate their remains. Thus, altars have been erected on the earth which was moistened with the blood of the martyrs; and it is not without a particular providence of God, that the Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles is built on the spot where the palace of the first persecutor once stood. In fact, what more calculated to attest the triumph of patience over barbarism, of virtue over vice, of truth over error, in fine, of Christianity over paganism? Could any contrast be more striking? Is there an object more deserving our reflections?

This *piazza* of St. Peter was formerly so venerated, that Pius V., on crossing it with a Polish ambassador, who had asked for some relics to bring to his country, stooped down, and taking some earth in his hands, put it into his handkerchief, and gave it to the ambassador, saying, "Take this: I cannot give you any thing more precious."

The ascent to the church is by a magnificent flight of steps, which are almost entirely of marble; and at the bottom of which are two statues of St. Peter and St. Paul. On ascending, you admire more and more the façade, which is three hundred and seventy feet in breadth, and one hundred and forty-nine in height. The proportions are so admirable, that its columns appear of ordinary dimensions, and must be approached before they can be estimated. Each column with its pedestal and capital is eighty-three feet high, and eight feet and three inches in diameter. This façade, although majestic, is somewhat low for its breadth. Probably the architect, Carlo Maderno, preferred that it should

have this defect, than that it should conceal the cupola, the imposing *coup-d'œil* of which constitutes the greatest ornament of the church.

The vestibule is entered by five openings. At the sides of this vestibule are two galleries, which present at their extremities an equestrian statue of heroic appearance, placed in a deep recess, covered with a canopy and drapery. On the right is Constantine; on the left Charlemagne. Constantine is represented at the moment when he beholds the cross, under which he was to conquer; Charlemagne is crowned with laurel, after the manner of the Roman emperors. This portico is of such extraordinary magnificence, that a Swiss, who had left his country expressly for the purpose of seeing St. Peter's church, is said, after having examined it, to have been so delighted, that he returned without thinking of entering the church, which he thought he had seen.

Corresponding with the five gates of the façade are five doors, which open into the church. That on the right is walled up; it is called the Holy Gate; and since the year 1500, the solemnity of the jubilee is commenced every twenty-five years, by the opening of this gate, which ceremony is intended to represent the opening of a time of grace and mercy. It is again shut at the termination of the jubilee. On the wall which closes up this entrance is a cross of gilt bronze: pilgrims kiss it as they pass, and scrape away some of the plaster, which they bring home as a relic. The folds of the middle door are entirely of bronze, on it are *bas relief* representations of some portions of sacred history, and some facts of the life of Eugene IV., under whom it was made. Over the gate is a *bas relief* by Bernini, representing Jesus Christ giving the care of his sheep to Peter, to whom he addresses the words: "Feed my

sheep:”—words which alone suffice to confute heresy and schism. All the gates are adorned with columns of beautiful marble.

Let us now enter the church. This edifice, from the entrance to the end of the tribuna, is six hundred and fourteen English feet in length: notwithstanding this extent, the first *coup d'œil* produces no feeling of surprise. All parts are so well proportioned that nothing appears long, or broad, or high; because nothing is seen there that could make the building appear so: that is, there is nothing short, low, or small in it. Thus the greatest astonishment felt on first entering this most beautiful of Christian churches, is the absence of this feeling. The first sentiment it inspires is that of respect; it renders sensible the majesty of the God to whose worship it is dedicated. It is his temple—the place where we should offer our adorations to him. I speak thus of it, my dear friend, because such was the feeling I experienced when first I entered it. I paid no particular attention to any thing in it; there was too much to be seen, and I did not wish to see all at once. It is only after repeated visits, after having considered all its details, that an idea can be formed of this immense edifice, which continually presents new subjects of admiration. When thus examined, some defects will be perceived in it; for man is imperfect, and the master-pieces of his skill betray the imperfection of their author; but these defects do not offend the eye, they are unperceived in the general beauty of the building.

On the right side, at the end of the grand nave, is seen an ancient bronze statue of St. Peter, which is much venerated. The saint is seated on a marble chair; with one hand he blesses the people, and with the other he holds the keys, the symbol of the authority God gave him on earth. The feet are always kept shining, and

the right foot has been almost worn away by the piety of the people, who reverently kiss them as a sign of their submission to the Vicar of Jesus Christ. On St. Peter's day this statue is dressed with pontifical ornaments. According to the archives of the church, St. Leo made this statue, when Rome was delivered from the threatened invasion of Attila; a circumstance in which that pontiff had a great part, but which he referred entirely to the intercession of the apostles. It was originally placed in the monastery of St. Martin, and was removed to its present position by Paul V.

At the extremity of the middle nave is the pontifical altar, which was erected and consecrated by Clement VIII., in 1594. The table of this altar is a beautiful slab of marble, more than fourteen feet in length, and upwards of six feet in breadth. In this altar, according to a respectable tradition, is contained an altar dedicated to St. Peter, in the time of St. Sylvester and Constantine. The Pope officiates at this altar three times in the year; at Christmas, Easter, and on the feast of St. Peter. He alone has a right to say mass at it; and if a cardinal supplies his place, as is generally the case on the feast of the Chair of St. Peter, he receives permission for that purpose, by a special brief, which only avails for that time.

Over the pontifical altar is a colossal baldachino, or canopy, of costly materials and antique form. The top is of gilt bronze: it is in the form of a canopy, and sustained by four spiral columns of the same metal, entwined with vine branches, which rise as high as the Corinthian capitals. At each corner of the canopy are groups of angels, some holding a tiara, keys, and other emblems of pontifical authority; while others have garlands of flowers, which they seem about to throw on the altar. This admirable composition, the greatest that is known

in bronze, was executed by Bernini, under the pontificate of Urban VIII.; the escutcheon of this Pontiff is seen on the pedestal of each column. To cast this canopy cost 60,000 dollars, and the gilding of it 40,000 dollars. The metal was purchased at Venice; 186,000 Roman pounds of it were employed.*

Fifteen years later, after the plan of the same Bernini, and by the orders of Alexander VII., was erected at the extremity of the church, the superb monument, called the Chair of St. Peter. The chair is sustained by two Latin fathers, St. Ambrose and St. Augustin; and by two Greek fathers, St. Chrysostom and St. Athanasius; and is surmounted by two Genii, who appear to protect it. Above shines a large glory, in the midst of which is the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove. The rays of this glory are brilliant, because the work is entirely of gilt bronze, and it is illumined by glasses, which increase the effect of the gilding. This chair of bronze is a reliquary, in which the identical chair used by St. Peter is religiously preserved. It is of wood, and adorned with small columns. All around are figures of ivory. The back was somewhat injured, but it has been strengthened by an iron band; and at the sides are the hooks, through which were passed the poles that served to carry the Pope on the day of his coronation, as has been the practice for many ages. Under the pontifical altar is a subterranean chapel; and in this chapel, where the first Christians were wont to assemble, and which the faithful of following times have adorned, is a tomb, containing the relics of the great apostles. It is called the confession of St. Peter, although this name is extended to the great altar erected over it. The descent is by a double stairway of white marble, encircled by a balustrade of varie-

* The Roman pound contains but twelve ounces.

gated marble, and bearing ninety lamps, which burn day and night. These lamps are of gilt copper; formerly they were of silver, but in the evil days which closed the last century, the French took possession of them, doubtless because they thought it was too much luxury for *citizens*, who had preached up detachment from the world. The walls of the interior are incrustated with precious stones. The gate which leads to the tomb is of gilt bronze. Opposite this gate is the colossal statue of the venerable Pius VI., in the attitude of prayer. It is one of the master-pieces of Canova.

The lamps of the altar of St. Peter are extinguished on Good Friday. Their absence was formerly supplied by a spectacle no less brilliant than solemn. A metal cross, twenty-five feet high, and lit with three hundred and fourteen small lamps, was suspended from the top of the canopy, which formed a brilliant *coup d'œil*, and produced an extraordinary effect. Notwithstanding the extent of this basilica, the cross illumined the two great naves, and could be seen even from the extremity of the piazza. It was precisely the effect which it produced that moved Leo XII., in 1824, to prohibit it; since that time it has not been exhibited. Young artists were accustomed to watch this moment to catch the *chiari scuri*, and sketch the beautiful reflections of light and shade. What was still more scandalous, a number of strangers assembled, and regardless of the sacred sign of our redemption, profaned the sanctity of the place, and offered insult to the mystery, the remembrance of which was renewed on that day. That day is still a day of Christian sorrow—the sanctuary is in mourning—the altar is without sacrifice; and if the Christian does not always abstain from labour, it is because labour is one of the punishments of sin, and the day of the Saviour's death ought to be a day of penance. Honour, then, is

due to the sovereign Pontiff, who, in abolishing what he could not correct, at least saved the cross from the fresh outrages which heresy and infidelity would have offered. And who were those strangers, who, in the capital of Christendom, in a temple most calculated to inspire sublime thoughts, came, on that holy day, to mock at the faith of Christians — to laugh, to chat, to eat, and act in a manner they would not presume to do in a Turkish mosque? There were Christians among them; but those erring Christians, whom unjust prejudices and secret interests keep separated from the church of their ancestors. They were those English, who would scruple, in London, to touch a *piano* on Sunday; they were natives of a certain part of Germany, who preserve so gloomy a silence in their naked temples. Among them might be seen some young Frenchmen, in whom devotion to the arts extinguished other and better feelings, and who admit no religion that cannot be demonstrated by algebra! These were the people who came to outrage God in his mysterious humiliations. There are, doubtless, exceptions; all those who cultivate the arts are not, therefore, to be ranked with the incredulous. Many English have preserved a respect for holy things, and are not prepared to offend public decency. All the Protestants of Germany do not regard the cross as a sign of superstition; for I can affirm that more than one of their ministers has a crucifix in his domestic oratory. It is, however, true, that on the great solemnities, when religion displays at Rome more pomp and magnificence, strangers assemble in greater number, and give more than ordinary scandal. Curiosity is not the only motive which brings them; they come with perfidious intentions; and, on their return to their country, they charge the Roman church with the disorders, of which they themselves were the authors. Formerly the Saviour of the world, at the

view of the profanations which dishonoured his father's house, showed himself inflamed with an ardent zeal: he drove the buyers and sellers from the temple, and his commands were silently obeyed. Our temples are more holy than that of Jerusalem; how great, then, is their crime, who make no more account of them than of the theatre? Thou, however, O my God, seest these excesses; thou seest them approach even the foot of the altar, where thou dost repose, and even when thou offerest thyself up for those who commit them. How awful is that forbearance! For my part, I have taken the resolution to avoid those distracting ceremonies. Fortunately, I saw them on my first visit to Rome, and although I did not assist at them with all the attention they demanded, they made on me an impression which time has not effaced. What would my feelings now be, when the habit of prayer has rendered me more sensible to the truths of faith? But I know my character. Irreverence in the holy place exasperates me; I might involve myself in some serious altercation, and only add to the number of the scandals which I deplore. In avoiding them, I do what prudence dictates: and wishing to discharge the duties of my religion, I go the next morning to prostrate myself at the foot of the altar, and offer some satisfaction to Jesus Christ for the outrages he received on the preceding day. What can weak prayers effect? It is not enough to deplore these disorders; the public authority ought to suppress them. If this cannot be successfully done, private authority ought at least endeavour to diminish them. Every Catholic should, by example, counsel, and a discountenancing air, condemn them, and make their authors blush.

I have spoken to you, my dear friend, of the "Confession" of St. Peter, and what struck me most in the grand nave of the church. I would never finish if I were

to pass thence to the side naves, and attempt a description of the beautiful chapels and splendid mausoleums they contain. All these chapels are admirable for the mosaics, the statuary and painting with which they are decorated. What most strikes the stranger, who sees them for the first time, and considers them separately, is, that they all appear as large as churches; and in proportion as he recedes from them, they re-enter, as it were, into their fitting proportions, and appear once more chapels. Hence he is enabled to estimate more correctly the extent of each part, and to judge better of the dimensions of the whole.

In one of these chapels is a statue of the Blessed Virgin, holding her dead Son in her arms. This group is regarded as one of the master-pieces of Michael Angelo, and was executed by him in his twenty-fifth year. The Gregorian chapel is so called from Gregory XIII., who constructed it, and who had the satisfaction to see it completed in his pontificate. It cost him more than 600,000 dollars. Under the altar, which is exceedingly rich, rests the body of St. Gregory of Nazianzen, transferred hither in 1580. Near this is the body of Gregory himself, who died in 1585. The *bas relief* on the front of the tomb, represents the reformation of the calendar, which was made in 1582, by the exertions of this pontiff, and was at length adopted even by the Protestants.

Two other mausoleums particularly struck me. That of Christina, Queen of Sweden, who died at Rome, in 1689; there is on it a *bas relief*, representing the abjuration of Lutheranism, made by her at Inspruck, in 1655. The other, of the celebrated Countess Matilda, whose ashes were removed from Mantua to Rome by Urban VIII. This countess, having defended the Popes, is represented with a sceptre in the right hand, and the tiara and keys on the left arm. On the *bas relief* of this mo-

nument is seen Gregory VII. at Canossa, giving absolution to Henry IV., who is prostrate at his feet.

Having presented you with a sketch of the lower parts of St. Peter's church, I would wish to speak to you of the cupola, which is the principal wonder of this astonishing structure. I will, however, only say one word to you about it. I do not mean to refer you to the voluminous descriptions which have been made of it; these descriptions are, doubtless, very exact; but there are many things which cannot be conceived without having been seen, and even frequently seen. I prefer, then, inviting you to come to Rome, and if you come, you will not only examine the interior, but also the exterior of the church. In the company of an artist, who shall have studied the plan, and who knows the distribution of all its parts, you will not fear to mount its terraces, penetrate the depths of the walls and of the pillars which support the cupola, and you will then acknowledge that it is the boldest work which architecture ever attempted.

"A greater quantity of stones," says a celebrated writer, "could be raised to a greater height on a more extended base; but of so many colossal parts to compose a whole, which appears simple and grand—from such accumulated riches to compose a monument, which is so purely magnificent, and by an astonishing harmony of proportions, form one prodigy of so many united wonders—this is the master-piece of art, and the work of Michael Angelo.

"The cupola of St. Peter's is, perhaps, its most astonishing part. The Pantheon, undoubtedly, suggested the first idea. The artist admired the imposing mass of the temple of all the Gods; the multitude appeared surprised that the earth sustained its weight. Michael Angelo said: *I will hang it in the air*: and he raised the dome of St. Peter's."

The drum of St. Peter's cupola is sustained by arches, which rest on pilasters, about 230 feet in circumference. At the foot of these pilasters are chapels, adorned with colossal statues of St. Andrew, St. Veronica, St. Helena and St. Longinus. These statues are beautiful, and have a reference to the four most precious relics of the church, after those of the apostles : that is, the handkerchief with which St. Veronica wiped the sacred face of Jesus, on the way to Calvary ; a piece of the wood of the true cross, which St. Helen was so happy as to discover ; the lance with which the soldier, known since by the name of Longinus, pierced the side of our Lord ; and the head of St. Andrew. These relics are exhibited to the people on certain days. They are preserved in beautiful niches above one of the statues, and to which an ascent has been made within the thick pilasters. The canons of St. Peter alone are permitted to ascend ; whoever desires to participate in the privilege must first be made an honorary canon of this church, a favour which is only granted to foreigners of great distinction. In 1625, Urban VIII. gave this title to Ladislas, who was subsequently king of Poland, and in 1700, Innocent XII. conferred it on Cosmo III., Grand Duke of Tuscany. In more ancient times, in 1425, the Emperor Frederick III. having come to Rome for the ceremony of his coronation, received from Nicholas V. permission to wear a canon's dress, and see the handkerchief of St. Veronica. The cupola is crowned by a lantern ; and this lantern which, from the piazza, appears so light, is itself a second cupola, around which persons may safely walk. The ball of gilt bronze, which surmounts it, is more than eight feet in diameter, and can contain fifteen persons very conveniently. The cross on the top is thirteen feet high.

When I first visited Rome, I was seventeen years old. It was an agreeable excursion, which my father made for

the benefit of his children : our whole family was there. After running over ancient Rome, and stopping some time before the triumphal arches, I then turned my attention to the Rome of Leo X. : and being more eager to visit the cupola of St. Peter than the tomb of the apostles, I ascended to the ball, and then to the cross which surmounts it. There are few who do not feel a certain feeling of dread at this great elevation. As for me, no sooner was I there than I wrote my name with the chalk I had brought with me for that purpose ; as if my name would have thence passed more rapidly to the temple of memory. I then endeavoured to descend. Before me was a small iron ladder, outside the cupola. I had got up by this means, and by it I was to get down ; but in ascending, being obliged to fix my eyes on the rail which supported my hand, I had only one point to contemplate : whereas, in decending I was in danger of being precipitated into the *piazza* of St. Peter's, which lay 448 feet beneath me, and which seemed to me an abyss. My head became giddy ; I cried out to my brother, who had got already down, that I could not follow him without risking my life, and that being obliged to remain where I was, I begged of him to convey my *adieux* to my family ; not to forget me, and to give my friends my new address : *To M. Baron Ferdinand de Geramb, outside the ball of St. Peter's church, Rome.* I know not if these *adieux* were communicated to my friends, or scattered by the wind. Of this I am certain, that I have no idea how I was extricated from this difficulty. It is scarcely necessary to add that, on the present occasion, I felt no desire to mount so high, although the ascent has been rendered much more commodious.

I intended to terminate my letter here ; but I have resolved to add a few words on the time which was required for the erection of St. Peter's, the number of

Popes who contributed to it, and the sums expended on it, in order to increase the interest of my description, and give you a juster idea of the greatness of the enterprise, and the merit of the execution, than any thing I have already said. Julius II. laid the first stone of this church on the 18th of April, 1506. He had adopted the plan of the celebrated Bramante, with whom the idea of the cupola originated. The eagerness of the Pontiff was zealously seconded; and although already in his 70th year, he had the satisfaction, before his death, of seeing the pillars, that were to support the cupola, raised as far as the cornice. This precipitation might have injured the solidity of the building; but after the deaths of Julius and Bramante, Leo X. employed architects, who strengthened the pillars already commenced, and made some change in the original plan, in consequence of the enormous expense it would require. At the death of Leo X. the work was suspended, and was not resumed till the Pontificate of Paul III. The architect chosen by this Pontiff proposed a new plan; and this was about being adopted when Michael Angelo appeared, who gave one that was not to be subject to alteration. All his designs were approved. This celebrated artist, finding himself advanced in years, caused a model in wood to be made, so that his death might not cause a change in the plan. Having laboured at the Basilica, under five different Popes, he died in 1564. The architects who succeeded him were ordered to adopt his designs, and one of them lost his place, for having departed from them.

Finally, forty-six years after, under Paul V., Maderno finished the church, and raised its façade; under Alexander VII. Bernini constructed the portico which encloses the piazza; and finally, almost in our days, the unfortunate Pius VI. added the sacristy, which is so necessary for church-service, but for which, however, Michael An-

gelo had reserved no place, either in the interior or exterior of the church—as he wished that the edifice should be detached from all additions, and perfectly regular, both in the interior and exterior. This sacristy was begun in 1776; it was finished in 1780, and consecrated on the 15th of June, 1784. If from that day, to which the completion of the entire work is to be assigned, we go back to the time when Julius II. laid the first stone, we will find an interval of almost three centuries. In this interval thirty-four Popes governed the church.

It is not so easy to determine the sums of money expended on this immense building. According to the calculation of Fontana, who has left an accurate account of them, the expense in 1693 amounted to 47,000,000 dollars. To this sum must be added the gilding, sculpture, paintings, mosaics, and so many other ornaments since the time of Fontana; and, last, the new *sacristy*. It will not be extravagant to estimate the total expense at 50,000,000 dollars.

When I consider what the repairs, inevitable in such a building, must cost every year, I ask myself, why do not the Catholic sovereigns contribute towards defraying them? In the old law, God would be adored only in the temple of Jerusalem; it was to this temple that the Israelites should bring their offerings if they would render them pleasing to the Lord; but in the law of grace, since the Gospel has been preached to the nations, there is no place on earth whence our adorations cannot ascend to heaven. I believe, however, that they would bring down on us more abundant blessings if we occasionally turned our eyes to St. Peter's, which, as I have already said, is another wonder of the world. This homage, rendered to the Prince of the Apostles, would maintain in the heart the respect and attachment due to his successors. Accustomed to acknowledge in them the same authority, we

would hold more firmly to the teachings of the church ; we would reject with horror whatever she condemns ; and by this act of faith, we would, perhaps, merit to see the end of the calamities, to which the forgetfulness of religion and love of novelty have subjected us.

Adjoining the Church of St. Peter is the palace of the Vatican, in which the Pope resides. It is an immense building, and may be compared, for its extent, to a city. It was given by Constantine to the sovereign Pontiffs, and was rebuilt by Eugenius III. in the middle of the twelfth century. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, Sixtus IV. added to it the chapel, called, from his name, the *Sistine Chapel* : and Paul III., about the middle of the following century, built the chapel, called from him the Pauline. Sixtus V. added new apartments, and placed there a library, which is become one of the richest collections in Europe. He also commenced a new palace, which has been finished by his successors. Finally, Urban VIII., in 1625, built the Gallery of Arms, where arms for 18,000 men are preserved. You will easily conceive that this palace, the work of so many Popes, cannot be a regular building. Hence, although the ablest architects have been employed at it, the disparity of its component parts causes it to have but little claim to architectural merit.

I will not speak to you of the paintings of Raphaël, or of the ancient statues which it contains ; but I must not omit a few words on the Sistine and Pauline chapels. The first, celebrated for the ceremonies of holy week, which take place there, is still more famous for the painting of the *Last Judgment*. This fresco of Michael Angelo occupies the entire back part of the chapel, from the top of the wall to within five or six feet of the floor. Nothing is better calculated to give an idea of the vast and enterprising genius of the artist than this piece. In

the upper part of the picture, angels are seen carrying in triumph the instruments of the passion ; in the middle is Jesus Christ having the elect on his right, the reprobate on his left hand : lower down is a group of angels who sound trumpets ; to the right of whom the just are seen ascending to heaven, and on the left the reprobate, who are being precipitated into hell. At the bottom flows a river, and old Charon receives the shades in his bark. Spectres, furies, and imaginary monsters, are seen in the lower parts of the picture, as well as some other figures—over whom, however, the Popes have caused less skilful hands to throw that drapery, with which the great artist had left them unprovided.

Notwithstanding this incoherence of ideas, and this inexplicable mixture of the sacred and profane, the *Last Judgment* of Michael Angelo is universally regarded as one of the best fresco paintings, and is esteemed by some connoisseurs as superior to every thing of the kind. The subject allowed some disorder ; and this is one of the causes of the success of this production, which, however, is less pleasing than astonishing.

The Pauline chapel, which Gregory XVI. has lately restored with equal taste and magnificence, has two large paintings by Michael Angelo—one representing the conversion of St. Paul, the other, the martyrdom of St. Peter. These two pieces are in the same strong and peculiar style. Michael Angelo was seventy-five years old when he painted them, and it is thought that they are the last efforts of this illustrious master. Not far from this chapel is the apartment where the Pope washes the feet of the pilgrims.

I will not stop to speak of the other apartments, which compose the Vatican palace, in all of which are to be seen excellent paintings and some precious furniture ; but the description would be long and uninteresting. The eye

and the mind become fatigued in running over them—what would it be to describe them?*

Adieu, my dear friend. I will speak to you in my next letter of the Basilica of St. John of Latran, and of that of St. Paul.

LETTER XIV.

St. John of Latran—St. Paul.

Rome, 5th of March, 1838.

The Basilica of St. John of Latran is the first patriarchal church of the west; it is the mother of all the churches of Rome and of the world—*Ecclesiarum urbis et orbis mater et caput*. It has had many names. It was called the Basilica of Constantine, from Constantine

* "Chattard confesses that his description of the Vatican, in three octavo volumes, cost him sixteen years' labour! This will not, however, appear so surprising, if we reflect that independently of the Basilica of St. Peter, which, according to Fontana, is fifteen times greater than Solomon's Temple; he had also two chapels as large as churches, 22 court-yards, 12 great halls, 11,000 rooms, several painted galleries, 22 immense stair-cases, besides a world of minor ones, to measure and survey.

"If we calculate, moreover, the number and value of the treasures, both profane and sacred, contained within its precincts, the Vatican may, doubtless, vie, in costliness and splendour, with the most celebrated fabrics of antiquity, with those of Balbec, Memphis, Nineveh, Persepolis, Palmyra, and the 'Domus Aurea' of Imperial Rome.

"The storied walls and pictured chambers of the papal palace present a mass of monumental testimony and unimpeachable records, which, in their mute eloquence, proclaim that it was Catholicism inspired the great architects, painters, sculptors, and poets of Italy, with their sublimest and most beautiful conceptions."—*Reminiscences*, pp. 143, 155.

the Great, who, about the year 323, built it near his palace of Latran, and gave it to the sovereign Pontiffs; also, *Basilica of the Saviour*, from the fact of Pope Silvester having dedicated it to "Christ the Saviour," (Christo Salvatori), on the 9th of November, 324. It was called the *Golden Basilica*, on account of the precious ornaments with which it was enriched; and, finally, in the seventh century, it was dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and hence is called most generally the *Basilica of St. John of Latran*.

In the portico of this church is a statue of Constantine, made during the lifetime of that emperor, and found in his baths at the Quirinal. This portico is one of the most beautiful in Rome; it is adorned with four columns and six pilasters, and surmounted by a balustrade, on which are placed twelve colossal figures. In the midst of these statues rises that of our Saviour in white marble.

Five gates lead into the church; the middle one is of bronze. On the right is one walled up; this is the holy gate; for the four principal churches of Rome have each a gate which is opened only in the year of the jubilee; that of St. Peter's by the Pope; and those of St. John of Latran, St. Mary Major, and St. Paul, by cardinals deputed for that purpose. The interior of the church is very grand, and yields only to St. Peter's in extent and magnificence. It is divided into five naves. In twelve niches of the middle nave are twelve colossal marble statues of the apostles. These statues are beautiful; and the niches, ornamented with twenty-four columns of *verde antico*, produce a grand effect. The top of the sanctuary is covered with very ancient Mosaic, representing Jesus Christ in the midst of his saints. The ceiling is rich with gilding, and variously coloured compartments. What merits most attention is the great altar; where,

under a pavilion of carved marble, sustained by four porphyry columns, are preserved the heads of St. Peter and of St. Paul, enclosed in two busts of silver, on the breasts of which is a *fleur de lis*, made of diamonds, presented to the church by a king of France, Charles V., named the Wise (*le sage*).

This church has some beautiful chapels, the most remarkable of which is that called the *Corsini Chapel*, where Clement XII. of this illustrious family is buried. The tomb consists of a porphyry urn, that was for a long time in the portico of the Pantheon, and which is believed to have contained the ashes of Agrippa. It is of a beautiful form, and its cover, a modern work, has been made by skilful artists. Above is the statue of the Pope, represented sitting and giving his benediction. Opposite is another monument, erected to the memory of Cardinal Neri Corsini, the uncle of the pontiff. On entering the church by the side portico, is seen a pedestrian statue of Henry IV. of France. It is said that the kings of France since the time of this monarch enjoy the title of first canons of St. John of Latran.

Opposite St. John of Latran is a celebrated church, with a magnificent portico and five stairways. The middle staircase was in the palace of Pilate at Jerusalem, and was thence transported to Rome. It is composed of twenty-eight steps of white marble—sacred steps, which our Saviour twice ascended and descended, and which he bedewed with his tears and his blood. They are venerated highly by the pilgrims, who ascend them on their knees, and then descend by one of the side staircases. Great indulgences are attached to this devotion, and hence the marble has been somewhat worn away by the concourse of the faithful. This obliged Clement XII. to cover them almost entirely with wood, and thus prevent further injury.

The most striking ornament of the Latran piazza is an obelisk of red granite, covered with hieroglyphics, and one hundred and eight feet high. This obelisk was made under Ramses, who, according to the common opinion, lived 1300 years before Jesus Christ: it was first placed in the Temple of the Sun at Thebes. It was cast down by Cambyzes, and lay surrounded by ruins, when Constantine, anxious to adorn his new capital with this ornament, transferred it by the Nile to Alexandria. He was prevented by death from accomplishing his project. Constans, his son and successor, brought it from Alexandria to Rome, with the view of erecting it in the *Circus Maximus*. It was overturned once more by the Goths, and lay broken into three pieces, and buried twenty-five feet deep in the earth, until the time of Sixtus V. who caused it to be disinterred and restored. It was placed in its present position on the 10th of August, 1583, and dedicated to the cross of the Saviour. It is the largest obelisk known to be in existence.

I have already told you, my dear friend, that the church of St. John of Latran enjoys a primacy over all other churches in the universe: it is the episcopal church of Rome; the first where the Popes dwelt, and their successors take possession of it immediately after their coronation.

On the day of this great ceremony, all the streets through which the cavalcade is to pass are splendidly prepared: the windows, the façades of the churches and of the palaces, are covered with drapery of rich stuffs and tapestry. A triumphal arch is erected in the Forum, in the name of the Duke of Parma; and the senate erects another on the piazza of the capitol, when the new Pope is a Roman. At the appointed time the Pope goes in surplice to the Vatican palace, where he finds the cardi-

nals assembled, and thence to St. John of Latran in the following order.

A division of dragoons and a detachment of the papal guards commence the procession and clear the way; then follow, two by two, the Pope's squires and those of the cardinals; the gentlemen attached to the service of the palace; the chamberlains, the officers of the Roman treasury, the commissary of the *camera Apostolica*; the chaplains, the consistorial advocates, the Roman barons and princes with their pages and footmen in liveries; the captain of the Swiss guard, and four of the Swiss with battle-axes in their hands. After these come the prelates, mounted on mules caparisoned in black; the auditors of the Rota, on mules with violet trappings; the ambassador of Bologna, and the governor of Rome, at the right of one of the princes of the throne, so called from having a right to be always at the side of the pontifical throne. The papal cross is borne by an auditor of the Rota. Immediately after comes his Holiness, surrounded by Swiss guards, and mounted on a white horse adorned with crimson velvet fringed with gold. The bridle is held by one of the princes of the throne as far as the *piazza* of St. Peter's, and thence to St. John's by the *conservatori* of Rome, dressed in long robes of golden tissue.

The Pope is followed by twenty-five pages dressed in silver cloth; one of them carries the papal hat, another a crimson veil bordered with gold-lace, in which are gloves and other things for the service of his Holiness. Foot-guards march behind the pages, and close the first part of the procession. In the second, which is opened by a squadron of cavalry, is seen the master of the chamber mounted on a mule with violet trappings: the Pope's physician, the guardian of the wardrobe, and different officers of the household. The Pope's seat (*la sedia pa-*

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pale) is borne by two mules covered with crimson velvet trappings, embroidered with gold. Then come the cardinals, two and two, according to priority of creation, with copes, and the red hat on their heads, mounted on mules caparisoned in red, and conducted by two squires holding maces, marked with the arms of their respective masters. After the cardinals come the patriarchs, the arch-bishops and bishops (*assistenti al soglio*,) the auditor of the *camera*, the treasurer, the major domo, the apostolic prothonotaries, archbishops and bishops, and the referendary of signatures. These are followed by the carriage of his Holiness, covered with crimson velvet, and drawn by six white horses. With the carriage are two captains of the guard preceded by two pages, carrying their lance and casque; and between these two captains is the standard-bearer of the holy-church, with colours unfurled. A company of noble guards, one of dragoons, and one of infantry, close the procession, and terminate this magnificent cavalcade.

If the Pope cannot ride, either on account of his age or infirmity, he is carried in a litter half open. His Holiness stops at the capitol, where the city troops are ranged under the orders of the senator of Rome. This senator, in a toga, with a golden collar on his neck, and an ivory sceptre in his hand, addresses the sovereign pontiff in the name of the Roman people, a Latin discourse, in which he promises him obedience and fidelity. His Holiness replies with the usual formalities.

They then advance towards St. John of Latran. The clergy and chapter of this basilic come to meet him, with the cross and two pavilions. As soon as the Pope gets off the horse and enters the porch, the cardinal arch-priest as head of the chapter, kneels on the threshold of the portico, and gives him a gold cross to kiss, while the choir sings, *Ecce sacerdos magnus*, &c.—Behold a great

priest," &c. In the mean time his Holiness turns towards the pontifical throne, which is raised near the holy gate; clothes himself in his pontificals, and receives the precious mitre on his head. Then the archpriest, in the name of the chapter, presents him the keys of the church; one of gold, the other of silver, on a basin of gilt silver, covered with flowers. He then begs of his holiness to admit the clergy of the basilica to kiss his feet, which is granted.

When this ceremony is over, and the cardinals have put on their sacred vestments, the holy Father comes to the great gate; where he is incensed thrice by the cardinal archpriest, and then goes to the altar of the crucifix, where the holy sacrament is exposed. While he prays there, the choir chaunt the *Te Deum*. From the altar of the crucifix he passes to the high altar, puts himself under the protection of St. Peter and St. Paul, and having venerated their sacred relics, he goes to sit on the throne, which is erected in the middle of the sanctuary, where the cardinals come to promise him obedience, and receive the *presbyterium*—that is, two medals, a gold and silver one. Descending from the throne he returns to the altar, whence he gives his benediction. Then going up to the lodge of the façade of the basilica, he gives his benediction again to all the people, amid the ringing of bells, the firing of cannons, and the discharges of the troops stationed in the piazza.

I intended to speak of the Basilica of St. Paul, but I experience too melancholy a feeling in thinking of it. This edifice was begun by the great Theodosius; finished by his son Honorius; embellished by so many emperors and pontiffs, and was one of the most beautiful of Christian antiquity. It was burned in 1823. Great efforts are being made to restore it. Will it ever approach what it was? Adieu.

LETTER XV.

Magnificence of the church ceremonies—Corpus Christi—Golden Rose—Agnus Dei—St. Agnes's day—Benediction of the two lambs, of whose wool the Pallium is formed.

Rome, 11th of March, 1838.

It is equally just and necessary, that the churches of the Catholic world should find in the mother church the model of that piety, decorum, and magnificence, which ought to accompany our holy ceremonies. On this point the Popes have ever been faultless. In the third century, Zephyrinus, pope and martyr, wished that the private houses, the hidden grottoes, and the vast and venerable reliquary of the catacombs, in which the holy mysteries were celebrated, should be adorned as well as the calamitous circumstances of the times permitted. When it pleased God, in the following century, to put an end to the persecutions, the vicar of Jesus Christ was enabled to present himself to the world in his sublime character, and to exhibit, as the sign of his power, the vesture of Melchisedech. Freed from the sanguinary shackles with which she had been bound, the church then laid aside her garments of mourning; and the pastor of the divine sheep-fold displayed a holy magnificence in the celebration of the sacred mysteries, and connected with them an imposing grandeur. The Popes gradually formed a college of bishops, to attend them at the altar, and to concur with them to increase the splendour of the holy solemnities. The Catholics of the Christian world, whom piety attracts to Rome at certain festivals, are well acquainted with all the details into which I am

about to enter. As for you, my dear Charles, to whom I write, and for whom Rome is, as yet, but a city of desires, it is right that you should have some conception of the ceremonies which take place in the basilica of St. Peter, and in the private chapel of his successor ; and therefore I have resolved to describe them to you as well as I am able. I will begin with those of the Papal chapel.

The clergy, who assist the Sovereign Pontiff in the ceremonies at which he is present, and which are called Papal chapels, consists of seventy cardinals, or princes of the Holy Church, who form his choir. The mass is generally sung by a cardinal, or by a bishop *assistente*, and the Pope assists at it. He is dressed in a cope, and seated on his throne, from which he descends only at the time of the consecration. Beside him, sit two cardinal deacons, and opposite to him a cardinal priest. On the left are the bishops, *assistenti al throno*, and, on the right, the princes who enjoy the same dignity. On the third step are seated the *conservatori* of Rome, and on the last step the *auditori* of the Rota, the Master of the Sacred Palace, the clerks of the chamber, and several other dignitaries. The apostolic prothonotaries, and the domestic prelates of his Holiness, occupy a wing of the choir behind the cardinal deacons. Behind these sit the generals of the religious orders, the apostolic preacher, the governor of Rome, the auditor of the chamber, the treasurer, the major-domo, bishops, and the procurator-general of each order. At the foot of the altar are the masters of ceremonies, the acolythes and the other officers attached to the Papal chapel. This ceremony takes place either in the Sixtine chapel at the Vatican, which is less famous for the richness of its altar than the beauty of its paintings, or in the chapel of the Quirinal palace, which I find less rich, but more handsome.

The Pope himself celebrates in public three times a year : at Easter, on St. Peter and St. Paul's day, and at Christmas. From all parts of the Christian world, the faithful assemble at Rome on those occasions, to unite themselves with their head, and draw closer the bonds of unity. It is for them a new Jerusalem, another Pentecost. There are seen men of all nations, speaking all languages ; and, as at the birth of Christianity, the Armenians and the Medes, the Parthians and the Copts embrace and join hands. What pencil, my dear Charles, could do justice to this magnificent picture.

Turn now your eyes to the holy Father. He is borne aloft on his chair, more like a victim than a prince, and he suffers the homages which are rendered to his dignity. It is to him that all power has been given on earth. He is the first majesty of this world, and he takes the title of the servant of the servants of God. Under the tiara which crowns him, is concealed the humility of a child of St. Benedict. He unites in his person all that is little and great, weakness and strength, poverty and wealth.

Gregory XVI., whom I have seen thus suspended, between the heaven which regards him with love, and the earth which he edifies by his virtues, generally weeps during these ceremonies. How, have I asked myself, can he weep, when all around him chaunt the hymn of triumph ? I forgot, for a moment, that tears are not always produced by sorrow. There are tears of delight, which rise from the overflowing satisfaction of the heart ; it was undoubtedly these that he then shed : he saw himself surrounded by his children.

Two deacons, one of the Latin, the other of the Greek rite, sing the Gospel successively in these two languages, in sign of communion. How significant and Christian-like is this custom ; and how fervently did I then aspire after those happy days, when the people, now divided,

will be again united under the pastoral staff of the same shepherd, and form but one fold ! Behold, unhappy Greeks, the Latins have not forgotten the peace of Lyons, or that of Florence ; let us once more embrace, never more to separate. Political motives have lately freed you from a cruel slavery, and probably you build your hopes on the affinity of our creeds. “ Undeceive yourselves,” said a celebrated diplomatist, on this subject, “ there are no brothers, where there is not a common mother.”

Pardon this digression. I return to my subject. The holy Father descends from his throne at the *offertory*, to commence the sacrifice, and remains at the altar until the *Agnus Dei*. After the *Agnus Dei*, he returns to his throne ; where he says the prayers which precede the communion, and where the eucharistic species are brought to him to consume. He takes the host, which he divides ; he consumes one-half of it, and gives the other to the deacon and sub-deacon. With a golden tube he takes some of the precious blood, and gives the chalice to the deacon, who brings it back to the altar, where, with the sub-deacon, he consumes the rest.

After mass, the Pope is carried to the great balcony, over the porch of the church, where, having prayed in a loud tone, he blesses the immense multitude, which is prostrate on the ground ; and then, turning towards the four quarters of the heavens, he blesses the eternal city, and the vast kingdom of the children of God ! This is a magnificent and affecting ceremony. As soon as the Holy Father appears, the ringing of bells announces his presence to the people, and the cannon of the castle of St. Angelo proclaim it to the universe.

Corpus Christi festival is not celebrated here as in France. Every country, every city has its peculiar customs. Rome has its own. If the picture which it presents on this solemnity has not the same grace, or the

same elegance as that seen in France, it is rendered more majestic and imposing by the presence of the head of the church.

As soon as the brilliant aurora announces the festival of the King of Kings, the cannon of the old castle of St. Angelo are discharged; the city and the country are soon filled with life and activity. Even the stranger, led by curiosity, yields to the general impulse, and follows the crowd to that place, where the victories, the power, and the eternal destinies of the cross are recorded. While the Pope and cardinals assemble in the Sistine chapel and assist at the celebration of mass, the procession begins to move.

The cross advances first; it is immediately followed by the children of the hospital of St. Michael, clad in black serge, by orphan children in white and in surplice, the religious orders, such as the fathers of penance, the hermits of St. Augustin, the Capuchins, the Minims, the Benedictins, the Camaldolese, the canons regular, &c. After the regular clergy comes the secular clergy, *viz.* the students of the Roman seminary, the fifty-four parish priests of the city, the canons of the collegiate churches, the chapters of the lesser basilica, and those of the three patriarchal churches—St. Mary Major, St. Peter, and St. John of Latran. Each chapter has a canopy or pavilion; that of St. John of Latran, the mother and mistress of the city, has the privilege of carrying two. Preceded thus by all the clergy, comes the chapel of the Pope, consisting of chamberlains of honour, of the sword, &c., with the golden collar and white plumed hats, squires in violet cassocks, procurators, confessor of the Pope's household, apostolic preacher, procurators general of the religious orders, commissary of the chamber, consistorial advocates, chaunters, auditors of the Rota, master of the sacred palace, private almoners, carrying the mitre and tiara of the Pope, sub-deacon, carrying the Papal cross,

two officers of the red rod, patriarchal penitentiaries preceded by two young clerics in cassock and surplice, holding in one hand a bouquet of flowers, in the middle of which rises a long wand, the emblem of the spiritual power ; mitred abbots, the archimandrite of Messina, the commander of the *Santo Spirito*, bishops and archbishops, the patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch and Jerusalem, in cope and mitre ; Greek, Armenian, and Syrian bishops, and other oriental patriarchs, vested according to their peculiar rite ; cardinal deacons indalmatics, cardinal priests in chasubles, cardinal bishops in copes, all with mitres, followed by their train-bearer, and having, to the right, a gentleman of their household, carrying a large flaming torch, and at their left, their chamberlain carrying their caps ; the dean of the sacred college in full robes, and wearing the red pastoral hat. The sacred college is accompanied by the Swiss guard, armed with cuirass and halberd, and by the guard of the capitol with their plumed hats. Then follow the *conservatori* of the Roman people, the governor of Rome, at the right of the prince attendant on the throne, dressed in black velvet. Finally, the Pope, carried on his seat, and holding in his hands the holy sacrament, under a magnificent canopy, the poles supporting which are carried successively by the representatives of different nations. Two cardinals precede him. On both sides four squires carry silver lanterns, and two chamberlains bear two large white *flabelli*, in the form of fans ; four priests continually give incense, and twelve squires carry wax torches on both sides of the canopy. The Holy Sacrament is followed by eight chaunters, by the auditor of the chamber, the treasurer, the major-domo, the apostolical prothonotaries, the generals of the religious orders, referendaries of the signature and Papal mace-bearers. The cavalry guards, the standard bearer of the church, a squadron

of carabinieri, one of dragoons, of infantry, and of the national guard, with their music, terminate this magnificent procession. On issuing from the Sistine chapel, it passes round the piazza of St. Peter, that part of which is not enclosed by the colonnade, having a temporary cover under which the procession passes—and returns by the colonnade. As soon as the Pope enters the church, the *Te Deum* is intoned, and the ringing of bells is united with the firing of cannon. The Pope places on the altar and adores the Holy Sacrament. He then gives from the altar his benediction to the people.*

Such is Corpus-Christi day at Rome, where the presence of the head of the church, the sacred college, and the concourse of so many other edifying bodies, constitute its principal solemnity. In France, and in France only, it must be acknowledged this festival is no less that of the earth than of its Creator. Here are not found those groups of youths, who, to use the language of Chateaubriand, “at the well-known signal of the master of the ceremonies, turn to the Eternal Sun of justice, and scatter rose leaves on his passage; nor those Levites, in white tunics, bearing before the Most High urns of smoking incense.” I have traversed the city, and I have not found repositories on the public walks. I have looked in vain for those white pavilions, adorned with rose garlands, and otherwise gracefully decorated. I have not perceived that agreeable odour with which your cities and hamlets are perfumed on this happy day, and I have said to some Romans: Your ceremonies would be incom-

* “Indeed, all the magnificent pageants and shows exhibited in the Circus Maximus, by the Pagan Romans of old, could not, I fancy, exceed, in grandeur of effect, the ensemble of this procession, as it majestically winds along the open space between the fountains and the obelisk, fronting the noblest edifice ever raised by Pagan or Christian hands.”—*Reminiscences*, p. 95.

parable, if you united the beautiful with the sublime—nature with art.” This procession is, however, one of the most magnificent things to be seen in Italy, and strangers generally contrive to be at Rome on that day.

On the fourth Sunday of Lent, called by the church the joyful Sunday, *Lætare*, the Pope, dressed in his pontifical habits, blesses a golden rose adorned with precious stones, pronouncing over it these beautiful and touching words: “O God, whose power has made all things, and whose power governs and sustains all; O God, who art the happiness and joy of the faithful, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify this brilliant and odoriferous rose. Thy people, delivered from the slavery of Babylon by the grace of thy word, who, by taking flesh, became the glory and joy of Israel, the king of the heavenly Jerusalem, our happy country; thy people will carry this rose as a sign of happiness and joy, as the symbol of that mystic root of Jesse, of that flower of the field, of that lily of the valleys, which thy prophets announced and sung, and under the image of which, they predicted and typified the Saviour. He is that eternal rose, engendered in thy bosom, who has gladdened and embalmed the world.” After this the Pope anoints it with balm, sprinkles on it some musk-powder and holy water, incenses it, and deposits it on the altar, where it remains exposed during the holy sacrifice. Formerly, the prefect of Rome received this rose, in return for the homages which he rendered to the Holy Father; at present the Pope sends it to some Christian king or queen, unless some monarch or other distinguished personage should be at Rome on this day, to whom it would be thought suitable to present it. What touching recollections are recalled by this rose!—how many pious allegories does it suggest! Thus, my dear Charles, religion ennobles

every thing ; there is nothing in nature which does not lead us to the Creator.

There is another ceremony which I have seen with pleasure, and which is indeed interesting and appropriate. The first year of their pontificate, and every seven years, the Popes, in the octave of Easter, bless a certain number of medals marked with the image of a lamb—a symbol of the sweetness and patience of Jesus Christ. Neither gold nor silver enter into the composition of these medals ; they are made of what remains of the pascal candle of the preceding year. On Easter Tuesday the Pope mixes some holy water, balm, and chrism, in which he dips them. From this odoriferous immersion they take the name of *Agnus Dei*. On Holy Saturday a sub-deacon, preceded by the cross, presents himself at the gate of the chapel where mass is being celebrated, and holding a basin full of these medals, he intones, in a loud voice, the following words : “ Holy Father, here are the lambs which announced the resurrection to you, the messengers who brought tidings of victory : they now come to the fountain, they are shining with brightness.” The choir answers, “ Alleluia, praise to God, alleluia.” He then advances to the throne, and the Pope taking these medals, distributes them to the dignitaries of the chapel. Urban V., in sending three of them to the Greek Emperor, John Paleologus, thus enumerates the graces attached to the gift : “ They bring down,” says he, “ the blessings of heaven on those who carry them, and who honour them by the sanctity of their lives—they preserve from fire and shipwreck, and are a pledge of peace and tranquillity.”

There is another memorial of youth, the day of St. Agnes, virgin and martyr. How this name pleases me ! I find it so sweet ; it has a bloom of innocence, an odour

of strength, an indescribable charm which is of heavenly origin. When I hear it pronounced, I have the idea of whatever is most amiable in a timorous sex, and whatever is most admirable in the courage of a hero. On the day in which the church celebrates the festival of St. Agnes, the Pope blesses two lambs, of whose wool the Pallium is woven. This ornament which appertains of right to the Sovereign Pontiffs, has been communicated by them to patriarchs, to archbishops, and some privileged bishops. The lambs are brought from the Church of St. Agnes, where they have been first blessed, to the Pope, who imparts to them a second benediction. They are then confided to the care of a monastery of nuns, who undertake to feed them. One of my wishes would be to see these favoured animals browsing in a field that was never trodden by a profane foot; what pleasure would I feel in caressing them! Nothing more innocent, nothing more pure; but nothing more difficult to witness. These little guests partake of the enclosure of their chaste hostesses, whom an impenetrable barrier secludes from the public eye. On the vigil of St. Peter, the *pallia* are laid on the tomb of the apostles; the following day they are placed among the relics, where they remain until the dean of the cardinal-deacons sends them to the candidates, who have first formally to apply for them.

I could wish that the Pontiffs who succeed, would imitate Marcellus; and instead of attaching this distinction to certain sees, would give it, as he did, solely in recompense for some action done for the interest of religion, and for the glory of the church. The pallium ought to be the distinctive mark of the confessors of the faith, as the palm is that of the martyrs.

Adieu, my good friend.

LETTER XVI.

The Pantheon.

Rome, 20th of March, 1838.

OF all the temples of pagan antiquity which remain, the Pantheon is the most beautiful, and the best preserved. It is generally thought that Agrippa, the son-in-law of Augustus, erected it and dedicated it to Jupiter the Avenger, in memory of the celebrated victory of Actium. Cybèle and other divinities were subsequently adored in it. This temple seems to have derived its name from this assemblage of gods and goddesses.

You enter it by a portico, formed by sixteen granite columns, each of one piece. There are eight in front, which sustain an entablature and frontispiece of the most perfect proportions that architecture could devise. Formerly there were seven steps leading up to this portico, which rendered it much more imposing than it is at present; only two of these have been left uncovered by the elevation of the soil.

The interior is of a circular form, which caused the appellation of 'Rotonda' to be substituted for its original name. Its diameter is one hundred and fifty-four feet; its height is of the same dimensions. It has no windows, but receives light from a circular opening of twenty-eight feet in circumference, in the middle of the dome. Although the solidity of its construction rendered it superior to the efforts of the barbarians, who frequently endeavoured to destroy it, it could not have resisted the attacks of time, had not Pope Boniface IV., to abolish the very memory of idolatry, obtained permission from the

Emperor Phocas to change it into a church, which he dedicated in 607, to the Blessed Virgin and all the saints. Then was honoured there the purest of creatures, where the impure Venus had first been adored, and a crucified God took the place of the thunder-rolling Jupiter.

Gregory IV., in 830, consecrated this church to all the saints who reign in heaven ; and this is probably the origin of the festival of All Saints, celebrated throughout the Catholic world on the 1st of November. 'The following day, the commemoration of all the faithful departed, is also a great solemnity at the Rotonda.

In 1640, Urban VIII. restored this church, and placed between the peristyle and the cupola two belfries, which, although necessary, but badly accord with the *ensemble* of the rest of the building. Benedict XIV., about the middle of the last century, made new repairs ; but the artists complain, that by whitening the interior of the cupola, its majesty has been diminished. "To whiten an old building," exclaimed one of them, "is as bad as to blacken a new one."

The remains of Raphael were deposited under the pavement of this temple ; the greatest painter of Italy well deserved to have the *chef d'œuvre* of the Augustan age for his resting place. Not long ago his bust, and those of many other illustrious men, were to be seen there. Pius VII., considering that if these busts multiplied, this temple, which had changed its profane destination under the Emperors, might lose its sacred character under the Popes, removed the busts to one of the halls of the capitol, and drew up the regulations to be adhered to by the artists, who wished to continue this interesting collection.

Here I would close my letter, had I not promised to communicate to you all my thoughts, and all the impressions I receive. I must then tell you, my dear friend,

that I never visit the Pantheon without thinking on what it cost Jesus Christ to establish his church, and bring men from the darkness of paganism to the light of his Gospel. But when I reflect that although this light should enlighten all nations, there are still people who sit in the shadow of death ; and that among those on whom this light has shone, in the very bosom of Christianity, there are some who turn away their eyes from it, and, through pride and attachment to their own opinions, pervert the means of salvation afforded them—I lament their lot, and feel myself penetrated with a lively feeling of sorrow. Reflecting on myself, I thank God for having preserved the purity of my faith, although, in my youth, I reckoned among my masters some whom error had infected. I have never presumed to judge my brethren ; and you will not find me reasoning as a theologian on the dissensions which distract the church. I cannot, however, avoid putting this question to myself. Were those men sincere, who caused such torrents of blood to be shed—those reformers, who, to justify their separation from the church of Rome, stigmatized as idolatrous the veneration which we give the saints ; and pretended that we could not invoke them, without derogating from the merits of Jesus Christ, and offering injury to his character of mediator ? Those men also forbade prayers for the dead. Fools that they were ; they did not reflect that in breaking the bonds by which we are united with the souls who in heaven are inebriated with delight, and with those who, in a place of expiation yet suffer pain, they took from the first a source of joy ; from the second, a means of relief ; and from us who yet remain on earth, the most efficacious means of persevering in the practice of good works.

Ruminating on these thoughts, I yesterday entered my room ; the spiritual works of Fenelon lay on my

table. I casually opened a volume, and found the very passage in which the author establishes the doctrine of the church on these points. You will read this extract with pleasure. Here it is : “ I see by the history of the Maccabees, that prayer for the dead was practised in the synagogue before the time of Jesus Christ. I see that it has been continued in the church from her purest ages. This prayer cannot be offered in vain. In petitioning for the relief of the departed faithful, the church evidently supposes that they endure some suffering, from which they can be relieved by her intercession. There are, says St. Augustin, Christians who have not lived so badly as to be excluded from the kingdom of heaven, or so perfectly as to enter it at once ; for *nothing defiled can enter it*. They have to expiate certain sins, which do not bring death to the soul. This delay of their happiness is a purgatory, through which they pass, *as through fire*. The church has always believed that her prayers could contribute to their relief, and accelerate their repose. Can we refuse to unite with the Spouse of Christ in so pious a petition ?

“ The church invites us to beg our brethren, who are already in heaven, as well as those who are on the earth, to intercede for us through Jesus Christ, our common and only mediator. God himself, who could have immediately pardoned the enemies of Job, obliged them to demand it, by the intercession of Job, whom they had condemned. Thus God grants us, through the prayers of the saints, what he would not perhaps give us through our own less worthy prayers. If we do not injure our only Mediator in asking the prayers of sinners—of those who are exposed to all the temptations of life — on what pretext can we refuse to unite our prayers with those of the church, to obtain the intercession of the Mother of

God, and of the other saints, who see Him face to face, and who are necessarily impeccable in his presence.

“From the earliest times the church has honoured the tombs of the martyrs; there she celebrated their triumphs, and offered up the blood of the Lamb, for whom they had laid down their lives. She carefully preserved their relics, which wrought an infinity of miracles, as we learn from the ancient fathers. Why fear superstition in following the most enlightened ages of antiquity in so innocent a practice?

“True, the Scripture says: *Thou shalt not make graven images*; but it adds, *to serve them*, that is, to adore them. Besides, there were images in the temple, and even on the ark. God forbid that we should adore images, as if they were divinities! We do not serve them; on the contrary, we use them. They are only simple representations of the miraculous visions of the Scripture, of the actions of Jesus Christ and of his saints. If they become an occasion of scandal, we break them without scruple. Images instruct the ignorant, and affect the most enlightened: they place the mysteries of religion, as it were, before our eyes. Why then refuse to unite with the church in a practice so ancient and so pure—so free from any tinge of idolatry—so exempt from popular superstitions, which are carefully excluded from them—and, in a word, so well calculated to nourish the piety of the faithful?”

The same truths are presented with still more force in a small work of Bossuet, entitled, “*Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church on matters of Controversy*.” Good books are not wanting; but are there many blind persons, who say with him of Jericho, *Lord, make me see*? Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER XVII.

The Coliseum.

Rome, 23d of March, 1838.

THE Coliseum, a building which surpassed in magnificence the pyramids of Egypt, the temple of Ephesus, and the other wonders of the world, is an immense amphitheatre, which was designed for the exhibition of gladiatorial combats, and which was often stained with the blood of Christians. The Emperor Vespasian built it in the year 71 of Christ, in the centre of Rome, where were previously the ponds of Nero. He employed in its construction about 12,000 Jews, whom he had brought with him from Jerusalem; and he spent on it about 10,000,000 crowns. Titus, his son, finished and dedicated it. These dedications were different, according to the destination of the edifices. The theatre was dedicated by a drama; the circus by a race of chariots; the Naumachia by naval combats; and the amphitheatres by gladiatorial shows, and by hunting wild beasts. Five thousand of these were presented by Titus; they were all killed. The solemnity lasted one hundred days.

The form of the Coliseum is oval, its greater diameter being five hundred and eighty-one, its lesser four hundred and eighty-one feet. It is said to have held 87,000 spectators sitting, and 20,000 standing up. Although it has suffered much, we can easily see that every precaution was taken to secure for it an eternal duration. Thus it was a proverb with the Romans, that when the Coliseum would fall, Rome would fall; and when Rome would fall, the entire world would be dissolved.

This monument subsisted in all its beauty at the commencement of the sixth century, but in 546 the barbarians who sacked Rome, were the first to injure it, by taking away the bronze clasps by which the stones were bound together. This example was too faithfully followed. While the Popes were at Avignon, some powerful persons threw down a part of it, to find suitable and cheap materials for the erection of magnificent palaces. Thus were built the *Farnese* and *Barberini* palaces; and it was on occasion of this latter being built, that the well-known line was composed:—*Quod non fecerunt barbari fecerunt Barberini*—(“What the *barbarians* spared the *Barberini* sacrificed”). In less enlightened times some of the Popes imitated the example which had been thus given; and Paul II., a Venetian, drew from it the materials for the erection of the Venetian palace.

This amphitheatre was no longer looked upon in any other light than as a quarry; and was on the point of being abandoned to the rapacity of the ambitious, when Clement X., considering its origin and its destination, resolved to dedicate it to religion and the arts. With this view, he erected around the arena fourteen uncovered altars, in memory of the mysteries of the passion, and a small chapel, which was dedicated to “Our Lady of Sorrows.” Subsequently, Benedict XIV. added some ornaments to the work of Clement X., and imparted indulgences to those who would make there the stations of the cross.

From that moment every thing changed: the Coliseum was respected, and the work of destruction ceased. I was about to exclaim, “O wonderful power of the cross,” when I remembered that formerly it had saved Rome from the fury of Attila. I ceased to wonder that it had triumphed over the pretensions of avarice, and

preserved a monument, which, even in its present state, is better calculated than any other to give a high idea of Roman power. Yes, my friend, if the cross had not been planted in this arena, not a stone of the Coliseum would now remain, and the astonished traveller would inquire, where it had been? It was then an indication of an enlightened mind—it was a sublime thought, to erect altars in this place. I will even add, that it was a duty; the blood of the first Christians had flowed in torrents on this arena; they perished there by thousands, not like gladiators, who made a trade of self-destruction, but were delivered up defenceless to the savage animals, which had been brought there at vast expense from the burning sands of Africa. During three centuries these massacres were daily renewed. When a Christian enters the Coliseum, he ought to kiss its walls, and say to himself what the angel formerly said to Moses on Mount Horeb, “Loose the sandals from your feet, for the ground on which you tread is holy.” In fact, the blood of our brethren, of our predecessors in the faith, once inundated this enclosure. Besmeared with pitch and resin, these courageous martyrs were here burned alive, to show light to the Roman ladies; or cast to ferocious beasts for the amusement of still more ferocious people, assembled to behold and glut themselves with their sufferings.

It was, indeed, a great achievement to have rescued the Coliseum from the stroke of barbarism and the ravages of cupidity: but it was moreover necessary to repair the injuries of time: and Pius VII. was occupied with this thought when he was torn from his kingdom. Under the imperial government this work was continued: the French, docile instruments of Providence, cleared away the arena, which was half covered with ruins. After their departure the Popes turned their attention to

the exterior parts, which threatened to fall. Thus, thanks to the zeal of an enlightened government, posterity will enjoy the sight of a monument, which, according to the observation of a traveller, is sufficiently preserved to enable the imagination to reconstruct it; and, on the other hand, presents the most beautiful ruins in existence.

A poor Franciscan comes every Friday to the Coliseum and teaches the people to meditate on the passion of the Saviour, in a place where the priests of Jupiter offered incense to their idol. Do not imagine that great eloquence is required to affect his auditory. Facts speak better than words; and the bare mention of the names of those who suffered in this arena is sufficient to make their tears flow copiously. The most hardened hearts melt at the recollection of these venerable men; the obscurity of faith vanishes, and a resolution is easily taken to imitate the models, which are here held up to view.

The calendar of these holy martyrs is seen on the gate of the chapel of Our Lady; among them is distinguished St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who was delivered to the beasts in the year of our Lord 107, under the Emperor Trajan. Although it was then forbidden to search after the Christians, it was not prohibited to condemn them to death, when they were denounced. I know not, my dear friend, if you are acquainted with the life of this generous martyr; for my part, I wished to read it at the very place where he had offered it up in sacrifice, and yesterday morning I went to the Coliseum. I read as follows:—

“ St. Ignatius, surnamed *Theophorus*, was a disciple of St. John the Evangelist. He was raised to the See of Antioch after the death of Evodius, and during the forty years of his episcopacy he gave the example of all the episcopal virtues. The death of the Emperor Domitian

having restored peace to the church, Ignatius rejoiced at it, on account of his love for the faithful, at the same time that he regretted that he had not been found worthy to suffer for the Lord. The persecution broke out again in some provinces under the Emperor Trajan. This prince being at Antioch, wished to consult for the glory of his Gods, to whom he attributed his victories over the Scythians, and he commanded the Christians to adore these false divinities, under the penalty of death.

“The holy bishop was brought before his tribunal; ‘It is then you,’ said the emperor to him; ‘it is then you, wicked demon, who dost dare to infringe my orders, and encourage others to perish miserably?’—‘No one calls Theophorus a wicked demon.’—‘And who is Theophorus?’—‘He who carries Christ in his heart.’—‘You believe then that we have not in our hearts the gods who aid us in overcoming our enemies?’—‘It is an error to call the demons whom you adore gods; for there is but one God, who made heaven and earth, and all that they contain, and one Jesus Christ, his only son, into whose kingdom I ardently desire to be admitted.’—‘You mean him who was crucified under Pontius Pilate?’—‘Yes; by his death he has crucified sin, and the author of sin, who has triumphed over the malice of the demons, and has subjected them to those who carry him in their hearts.’—‘You carry then Christ in you?’—‘Yes; for it is written, *I will dwell and repose in them.*’

“Trajan, irritated at the firmness with which Ignatius confessed the faith, pronounced the following sentence: ‘We order that Ignatius, who says that he carries in him the crucified man, be tied and brought to Rome, to be devoured there by the beasts, and serve as a spectacle to the people.’ ‘Lord!’ exclaimed the martyr, ‘I thank thee, that thou hast given me a perfect love for thee; and that thou dost permit me to be bound by these chains,

as was thy apostle Paul.' Saying this, he put the chains on himself; prayed for his church, and with tears recommended it to God; and then delivered himself up to the soldiers commissioned to bring him to Rome.

" Having arrived at Seleucia, he embarked in a vessel which was to range the coast of Asia Minor; although afterwards another and longer route was preferred. Ignatius was guarded, night and day, by ten soldiers, whom he compared to leopards, on account of their cruelty, and because his patience and mildness served only to irritate them. Despite of the vigilance of his guards, he found means to confirm in the faith the churches of the cities through which he passed. In the instructions which he gave them, he principally insisted on the necessity of avoiding heresies, and attaching themselves to the apostolic traditions. All the faithful, wherever he passed, ran to offer him the succour of which he might stand in need. The churches of Asia deputed bishops and priests to him, and charged many of the faithful to accompany him during the remainder of the voyage. This made the saint say that he had many churches with him. All were filled with consolation, on seeing him carry so far the love of suffering.

" St. Ignatius, who knew the power of the saints with God, was apprehensive lest they should pray for, and obtain his deliverance. He besought the faithful to unite with him, in begging that God would give him the favour of being devoured by beasts, and of thus going to Jesus Christ. With this view, he wrote from Smyrna to the Christians of Rome, who might interpose in his behalf, and snatch from him the crown of martyrdom. This letter, probably unique in its kind, is the expression of a heart inflamed with the most ardent charity. Here are some extracts from it:

" ' You cannot give me a greater proof of your affec-

tion than to permit me to be immolated to God, while the altar is prepared. The only favour I ask of you is, that you sing a canticle of thanksgiving to God the Father, because, through the merits of Jesus Christ, he has brought a bishop from Syria to the west, in order to transport him to the bosom of his glory. Do not yield to a false compassion for me. Permit me to be the food of beasts, that I may enjoy God. I am the wheat of God, and I must be ground by the teeth of beasts, to become the pure bread of Jesus Christ. Rather entice the beasts, that they may become my tomb; and that they may leave nothing of my body. Pray the Lord for me, that I may be a victim of God. If I suffer I will be the freed man of Jesus Christ; and he will make me arise in perfect liberty. May these beasts tear me in pieces at once. I will irritate them, that they may hastily devour me; and that it may not be with me as with some others whom they did not dare to touch. If they do not wish I will force them. I only desire the happiness of being re-united with Jesus Christ. Yes; provided that I enjoy Jesus Christ, I fear neither sword nor cross, nor beasts, nor the separation of my bones, nor the division of my members, nor the destruction of my body, nor all the torments which the rage of the demon can invent.'

"The report having spread that Ignatius was about to arrive, the Christians of Rome went to meet him, hoping that the people might obtain his pardon. The martyr, who, by a supernatural light, saw what was passing in their hearts, begged of them, with still more earnestness than he had done in his letter, not to oppose his happiness. He then knelt down with his brethren, and besought the Son of God to have pity on the church, to put an end to the persecution, and to preserve charity among the faithful.

“He arrived at Rome the 20th of December, and was conducted to the Amphitheatre. Two lions darted at him and devoured him in an instant, leaving nothing but the largest and hardest of his bones.”

Here the book fell from my hands. I seemed to hear the exulting shouts of the spectators, when they saw the lions devour the members of Ignatius. I asked myself with horror, by what furies were this people excited, who looked on with delight at the effusion of human blood—this people who were never more happy than when they returned from these scenes of carnage, and who, by a strange fatuity, gave to other nations the name of barbarians. I then cast my eyes on the stations of the cross, raised in the very place where so much blood had been shed. I thought on what our Saviour had suffered, and saw in his adorable wounds, the source, whence the martyrs derived their courage and constancy. It is related that some gladiators said, one day, to the emperor when filing off before him: “*Cæsar, morituri te salutant.*” “*Cæsar, those who are about to die, salute thee.*” What did they mean by these words? Did these madmen deem it an honour to amuse the sanguinary leisure of a tyrant by their last convulsions? The case of the martyrs was very different; they also said *morituri te salutant*, but it was a God, whom they addressed—a God, who had died for our salvation. Raising, at the same time, their eyes on high, they saw, like Stephen, the glory of the heavens; they darted forward in spirit towards this immortal country, after which they had so long sighed, and only left a senseless body to their executioner.

The church no longer beholds the blood of martyrs flowing; we have no more persecutions to dread; but have we not yet enemies to overcome? Finding within myself the answer to this question, I knelt at the foot of

the cross; I adored the Saviour of the world, and retired to my convent in silence and recollection.

Adieu.

LETTER XVIII.

Pompey's Statue—Rome the centre of the spiritual kingdom, which Jesus Christ wished to establish on the earth.

Rome, 31st of March, 1838.

I MIGHT apply to the whole of the eternal city, the observation which has been made on the Coliseum. Yes, my friend, notwithstanding the changes which the revolution of ages has produced, the imagination can yet reconstruct it; and if the traveller who visits it, is guided by the torch of history, he enjoys ancient, no less than modern, Rome. It is not easy for him to perceive the interval which separates them, when every thing reminds him of those celebrated men, with whose history he has been familiarized from his infancy, and whose shadows appear to linger here and awake so many recollections. I went, yesterday, to the *Spada* palace, where I saw the statue of Pompey, at the foot of which Cæsar fell, when he had been pierced with twenty-three wounds, and covered his face with the folds of his mantle. Pompey had also fallen under the dagger of an assassin. At the sight of his head, Cæsar turned away, and ordered him who had brought it to retire. It is said that this fatal image of the vicissitude of human things, drew tears from him. Nevertheless he failed to profit by this terrible lesson, and the conqueror met the same fate as the vanquished.

What was it that armed these illustrious rivals against each other, and broke the peace which seemed to unite them? If we believe historians and poets, it was jealousy and ambition. The passions of the powerful have often enkindled the flame of war; but God, also, has frequently made use of them for the accomplishment of his designs. Albeit the pride of conquerors, they are only the ministers, the weak instruments of his eternal decrees. Open the pages of history, and you will see that he made use of the Babylonians to chastise his people—of the Persians to restore them—of Alexander to protect them—and of the Romans to sustain them against the kings of Syria, who wished to reduce them to bondage. When the Jews had crucified the Saviour, were not these same Romans the unconscious ministers of the divine vengeance?

These facts are now well known, but it was necessary that time should lay open to us their real causes. In the mean while, writers have ascribed the revolutions, which were decreed in the councils of Providence, to causes purely human. For my part, my dear friend, when I consider, on the one hand, that the victory of Pharsalia terminated the existence of the republic, and on the other, that the new form of government was favourable to the establishment of Christianity; convinced, as I am, that God renders all these things subservient to the triumph of his church—I hesitate not to affirm that Cæsar, no less than Cyrus and Alexander, was an instrument by which He vouchsafed to prepare the way for the Gospel, and to subject the nations to the same law. “God,” says Bossuet, “having resolved to form of all nations a new people, first united all countries under the same dominion. The intercourse of so many different people, who before had been strangers to each other, and were now united under the Roman empire, was one of the

most powerful means, which Providence made use of for the propagation of the Gospel. If the same Roman empire persecuted, for three centuries, this new people, who sprung up on all sides within its borders, this persecution strengthened the Christian church ; it showed forth its glory with its faith and patience. The Roman empire at length yielded ; and having found something more invincible than itself, peacefully received into its bosom a church, against which it had waged so long and so cruel a war. The emperors employed their power in favour of the church ; and Rome has become the seat of the spiritual dominion, which Jesus Christ established on earth.

“ The time at length came, in which the Roman power was to fall, and when this great empire, which had vainly promised itself immortality, was to undergo the destiny of all other kingdoms. Although Rome became the prey of the barbarians, it preserved by religion, its ancient majesty.

“ Rome, which had grown old in the worship of idols, had considerable difficulty in abandoning them, even under the Christian emperors, and the senate prided itself on defending the gods of Romulus, to whom they attributed all the victories of the ancient republic. The emperors were wearied with the constant deputations from this body, who demanded the re-establishment of its idols, and who thought that to abolish the antiquated superstitions of Rome, was to offer an injury to the Roman name. Thus this assembly, consisting of what was most distinguished in the empire, and an immense multitude of people, among whom were the most powerful men in Rome, could not be rescued from their errors, either by the preaching of the Gospel, or by the visible accomplishment of the ancient prophecies, or by the conversion of almost all the rest of the empire, or by the example of the princes, whose decrees gave authority to Christianity.

On the contrary, they continued to reproach the church of Jesus Christ, to which, after the example of their parents, they attributed all the evils of the empire, and were ever ready to renew the ancient persecutions, if they had not been restrained by the authority of the emperors. Things were in this state in the fifth age of the church, a century after Constantine, when God at length remembered the many sanguinary edicts of the senate against the faithful, and the furious shout with which the Roman people, thirsting for Christian blood, had made the amphitheatre re-echo. He delivered this city, described by St. John as *drunk with the blood of the Saints*, to the barbarians. He renewed on it the terrible chastisements he had formerly inflicted on Babylon. This new Babylon was the imitator of the crimes of that of old, and, like her, was puffed up with her victories, and exulted in her riches and delights. She was sullied with the pollutions of idolatry, and distinguished for her persecution of the people of God: she now falls, like her prototype, in a remarkable manner, and St. John announces her destruction. The glory of the conquests, which she attributed to her Gods, is taken away; she becomes a prey to the barbarians, and is three or four times taken, pillaged, sacked and destroyed. The sword of the barbarian spares only the Christian. A new Rome, entirely Christian, arises from the ashes of the ancient city; and it is only after the irruption of the barbarians, that the victory of Jesus Christ over the Roman gods is complete: they are not only destroyed, but forgotten."

This citation is somewhat long, but it is too beautiful to require an apology. Read it once more, my dear friend; remark that the Senate adhered to the gods of Romulus even after the conversion of Constantine, and you will admit that, without an intervention of God's

providence, the struggles of expiring Paganism would have been much longer. The destruction of the Republic was, then, necessary for Christianity. Peter fixed his seat in the capital of the emperors, and it is from the chair of his successors that the light of the Gospel emanates : thus Rome became, in truth, the eternal city.

We have seen that God, irritated against Rome, delivered it up four times to the barbarians, and that it was pillaged, sacked and destroyed. In my next letter, I will endeavour to give you some details on these events. My sketch will fully exhibit the judgments of God on this city, and will make you, at the same time, see what a debt of gratitude it owes to its Pontiffs. I will have to make some researches on this subject, before I begin. Permit me to return to the *Spada* palace, from which I have wandered, and say something on the statue of Pompey.

In the court-yard of this palace are seen several *bas reliefs*, some of which belong to profane antiquity, while others are of the first ages of Christianity. There are some *ancient* monuments ; but what attracts most attention, is the statue of Pompey, the only one that is at Rome, and at the foot of which it is said that Cæsar was assassinated. This statue was found on the site of the dwelling house of Pompey, under the foundation of a wall which separated two cellars, so that the head was in one cellar, the body in another, a circumstance that caused some litigation between their respective owners. The judge, wishing I presume, to imitate the wisdom of Solomon, ordered the statue to be broken into two parts ; and that each of the litigants should have that portion which was on his premises. The unhappy Pompey was thus condemned to lose his head a second time ; and this judgment was about to be executed, when Julius III., the reigning Pontiff, was informed of it. This Pope

was a patron of the arts, and he resolved to save the statue. He purchased it for fifteen hundred dollars, and the dispute was thus terminated to the satisfaction of both parties.

This statue is about twelve feet high. Pompey holds a globe in his left hand, and the right hand is extended, as if he were speaking in public. This globe represents the different parts of the then known world, where he had carried arms and won laurels.

Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER XIX.

Sequel of the preceding Letter.

Rome, 2nd of April, 1838.

THE decline of the Roman empire may be dated from the reign of Arcadius and Honorius. These sons of the great Theodosius possessed none of the noble qualities of their father. Equally incapable of governing by themselves, or of selecting good ministers, they gave their confidence to ambitious men, who, to make themselves necessary, excited trouble in the empire, and even invited the barbarians to invade it.

About this time appeared Alaric, a Goth by birth. This man, to whom Arcadius had imprudently given the command of the auxiliary troops in Illyria, grew weary of an inactive dignity, and formed the design of invading Italy. The soldiers, whose chief he had hitherto been, proclaimed him king, and, in this new character, he marched towards the Julian Alps. On the first news of

this invasion, Stilico, who had all the authority in the West, marched against him, defeated him, and made him turn back to Illyria. Five years afterwards, the king of the Goths returned to Italy: but it was at the invitation of him who had before driven him back, and who now opened a passage for him, with a view of rendering him subservient to his views of self aggrandizement. Notwithstanding the secrecy with which Stilico concealed his plans, they were discovered, and he expiated his treachery with his life. The Roman soldiers slaughtered the wives and children of the barbarians, who served in the Roman armies, and whom they regarded as his partisans; while these latter, irritated by this cruelty, went in all directions to meet Alaric, and offer him the aid of their arms against Rome. This circumstance was favourable to him. He, however, affected moderation, and only demanded the money which Stilico had promised him. On this condition he offered to return to Illyria. To reject offers of peace, and be, at the same time, unable to make war, was the height of absurdity; this was, however, the conduct of Honorius. Alaric, seeing his proposition rejected, crossed the Po, and without losing time in attacking the cities that lay on his route, he marched to the capital and encamped at its gates.

Then was seen the destiny of Rome, which was reserved as a spoil for the barbarians. Alaric invested it on all sides; he made himself master of both banks of the Tiber, so that no supplies could be brought into it. Famine soon made itself felt; pestilence followed, and Rome was filled with the bodies of the deceased. The inhabitants were reduced to such a state of despair, that they were ready to devour each other. Having exhausted all resources, they finally determined to send an embassy to Alaric, to ask for peace. Alaric granted it; but he demanded all the gold, all the silver, and all the other va-

luables which were in the city. "King," asked the embassy, "what will you then leave to the Romans?" "Life," answered the barbarian. He however afterwards relented, and consented to raise the siege for a considerable sum. A deputation was sent to Honorius, then at Ravenna, imploring him to ratify the treaty. Then the king of the Goths raised the siege, and encamped in Tuscany, while awaiting the answer of the court, and the conclusion of the peace. The vaccillating court would, however, determine on nothing; and Alaric, believing that he was trifled with, returned and besieged Rome a second time.

It was not possible to succour Rome; and the senate, seeing that they were about to experience once more the horrors of famine, sent a new deputation to the emperor to impress on him the necessity of treating with the Goths, to which he at length consented. The Gothic prince withdrew his army again from Rome, and approached Ravenna to confer with Honorius. It was hoped that Honorius on beholding the sufferings of Italy, would make some concessions to Alaric; and every thing promised peace, when some private interests excited new difficulties, and blasted all these hopes. Alaric took once more the road to Rome. During this march he was accosted by a hermit, who besought him to spare the city. He answered: "I cannot stop; I feel within me something that impels me forward, and urges me to sack it." He laid siege to Rome for the third time. We have no details of the siege; but it seems to have been sufficiently long to have subjected the inhabitants to all the horrors of famine. "This city," says St. Jerome, "which had conquered the world, perished by famine, before it fell by the sword; scarcely did there remain any to carry the victor's chains." Alaric entered it on the 24th of August, 410, and gave up the city to the

ferocity of the soldiers, who, during six days, pillaged and sacked it. Women and children were slaughtered on the bodies of their husbands and fathers; many houses were burned; and, as if heaven and earth had conspired to punish this metropolis of idolatry, a furious hurricane accompanied the ravages of the Goths. The thunder levelled many temples, blasted the monuments, and pulverised the statues, which had been once so much adored, and which the Christian emperors had preserved for the ornament of the city.

The respect entertained by the conquerors for Christianity spared much Roman blood. Before entering the city, Alaric ordered that all who took refuge in the churches should be unmolested. His soldiers faithfully obeyed him; they were even seen to bring to these asylums those whom they wished to preserve from the general massacre. Many Pagans saved their lives by taking refuge in them, or merely by declaring themselves Christians. The Goths respected the sacred vessels, which they found concealed in the houses of Christians, and caused them to be reverently brought to the churches. When these men, maddened by carnage, approached those sacred places, the fury with which they were elsewhere seen to shed blood or make prisoners, seemed extinct. The fugitives, who were preserved in these asylums, re-peopled Rome, and built, in some sort, a new city, on the ruins of the ancient one. Some days after, Alaric abandoned his conquest; he had fulfilled his mission.

Rome had not yet risen from her ruins, when Attila, king of the Huns, turned his eyes on Italy, with the intention of avenging on this country the affront he had received in Gaul. This conqueror, whom his enemies called the *Scourge of God*, was followed by an immense number of barbarians. Having sacked Milan, he halted on the banks of the Po, and waited some time to delibe-

rate, whether he should turn back, or march towards the eternal city. Meanwhile, Valentinian trembled in his capital; the senate knew not what part to take. After much deliberation, the only chance of safety appeared to be an embassy to the king of the Huns, to implore peace. The Pope St. Leo, the honour of Rome and of the church, was selected for this purpose, as a Pontiff, whom virtue, eloquence, and age, must render venerable even to a barbarian, who was the terror of the world. Convinced that God is ruler of the most hardened hearts, St. Leo accepted the perilous negotiation; and, accompanied by a portion of his clergy, went to the camp of Attila. When introduced into his presence, he spoke with respect, but with energy, and besought him to restore tranquillity to Italy. The firmness of the Pontiff awed this ferocious prince, who, amazed at finding himself moved, said to those about him, "I know not why it is that the words of this priest have affected me." From this moment he became more tractable; he listened to the propositions of the emperor, put an end to hostilities, and evacuated Italy.

New troubles arose as if to procure St. Leo new titles to the gratitude of the Romans. Genseric, king of the Vandals, came in his turn to ravage Italy, and left everywhere marks of his cruelty. He was already before the walls of Rome, and Rome was without the means of defence. St. Leo did not dread to appear before him; he besought him, since Providence had put the city and its treasures in his power, to spare at least the blood of the inhabitants, and not to burn the houses. This petition was granted. The Vandal king entered Rome on the 5th of June, 455, forty-six years after it had fallen under the dominion of Alaric. Neither fire nor sword was employed, but the pillage lasted fourteen days. During this time the Vandals took away all that had escaped the Goths; and Genseric, on re-embarking, brought to

Carthage the riches of Rome, as Scipio had brought to Rome the riches of Carthage. All the vessels arrived, except one, which as the historian remarks, was loaded with the false gods. Thus, in the middle of the fifth century, there remained at Rome evident traces of idolatry; and I am not therefore astonished at the evils which it endured, or at those which the divine vengeance had still in store for it.

To accomplish the designs of Providence, and make the metropolis of idolatry the capital of the Christian world, was required a new people, of a purer character than the Romans, who, worn out with their vices, and always proud of a vain name, were too haughty to submit to the yoke of faith, and too degraded to aspire after an improved civilization. God spoke; and clouds of barbarians had twice deluged Italy. Unable to repulse them, the emperors gave them territories, and even incorporated them with their armies, so that at this time the forces of the empire were nothing more than a collection of Goths, Alani and Heruli, whom the state salaried.

Among this soldiery was a man of obscure origin, whose enterprising spirit formed him for ruling others. Seeing his companions discontented with the manner in which their services were requited, he instigated them to revolt, put himself at their head, and, on the 23d of August, 476, rendered himself master of Rome. From Rome he marched to Ravenna, where the young Augustulus resided. He stripped him of his purple, and sent him into Campania to lead a private life with his relatives. Thus did Odoacer put an end to the empire of the West; for he took not the title of emperor, but only that of king. He reigned fourteen years, after which time he had to contend with Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths. He was overcome, and perished by the hand of the conqueror. Theodoric knew how to profit by his

victory ; he repaired to Rome, where he was received by the senate and the people with every indication of submission. He announced himself as the restorer of the Roman power, and wished his people to adopt the laws and customs of the Romans, and form with them but one people.

Having reigned with glory for thirty-seven years, Theodoric became avaricious and cruel. On mere suspicion he cast the holy Pope John into prison, where he perished of sickness. The king survived him only three months. On the death of Theodoric, Justinian, Emperor of the East, conceived the project of restoring to the empire the western provinces, which had been separated from it. With this view he sent Belisarius into Italy, and this general rendered himself master of Rome. On his being recalled, the Ostrogoths took new courage, proclaimed Totila king, and, under the conduct of their new leader, came to lay siege to Rome. The inhabitants were already suffering from famine, when Justinian sent Belisarius back to Italy, but this general only arrived in time to behold the city, which he was sent to deliver, fall into the hands of the barbarians. Totila entered Rome on the night of the 16th-17th of December, 546 ; and, at the dawn of day, went to St. Peter's to return God thanks for the success of his arms. Many of the chief men of the city had taken refuge there. Totila forbade his soldiers to kill any one, or to insult the women ; but he permitted pillage, and no house was spared. The most wealthy citizens lost what yet remained to them ; and senators were to be seen covered with rags, begging their bread from door to door, and living on the alms of the (so called) barbarians.

Totila knew that he could not keep Rome, and he therefore resolved to destroy it. He threw down the walls, and would have persevered in the execution of his

design, had he not been dissuaded from it by the remonstrances of Belisarius, who besought him to spare this ancient mistress of the world, the most splendid monument of his victory. The wise counsels of St. Benedict had, doubtless, disposed Totila to listen to these remonstrances. When travelling through Campania he went to visit him at his monastery, of Monte Casino, and the saint said to him: "You do much evil: you have already done much; cease to commit injustice. You will enter Rome, you will pass over the sea, and after a reign of nine years you will die." All this was subsequently fulfilled. Before quitting Rome, Totila made all the inhabitants, with their wives and children, depart from it; he scattered them among the neighbouring provinces. The ancient capital of the world was changed into a frightful solitude, and had not God destined it to be the sanctuary of religion, it would, probably, have been buried under a heap of ruins, and have only left the shadow of a great name.

I will not follow this subject farther; and as I have said nothing of the Gauls, who first sacked this city in the year 564 from its foundation, I will not speak of Charles V. who took it in 1527, nor of the French, who invaded it in 1798. I am not an historian, and I have only had in view to recall to you the ways of Providence, in opening the eyes of the Romans, in breaking those odurate hearts, and forming for himself a new people. All was not accomplished at the epoch at which I have stopped; and when you run over the annals of the middle ages, you will see that Rome, after having been subject to the Goths, had still to suffer from the exarchs of Ravenna, and that it was about to fall into the hands of the Lombards when Charlemagne passed into Italy. He confirmed the donations which Pepin had made to the church; made the successor of St. Peter

more powerful than he had ever been before; and decreed that he should be for ever independent of foreign authority. Many events have since contributed to augment the states of the church; and the possession of these states, established by authentic acts, confirmed by a long succession of ages, is, moreover, remarks an English writer, "guaranteed by the free consent of the Roman people, whose gratitude and admiration have given to their bishop supreme power." Yes, my friend, gratitude and admiration are among the bases on which the temporal power of the Popes reposes. After the expulsion of the barbarians, when famine and pestilence consumed the desolate families, it was to their bishop that the Romans turned their eyes: and they found in him a powerful protector, who sacrificed his patrimony for their support; rebuilt their walls at his own expense; interested in their behalf the different courts of Europe; provided for all their wants, and sustained them in their trials. Such have been, at all times, the Popes; and thanks to the wisdom of their administration, the Roman States, as I have already observed, enjoy all the happiness, which humanity can reasonably desire.

Adieu, my dear Charles.

LETTER XX.

The cholera—Charitable institutions.

Rome, April, 1838.

THAT scourge, which affrighted all Europe, desolated many cities, and disconcerted all plans; that plague, of which nothing but its ravages is known, and before which science yet remains mute and confounded—the cholera, having visited the greater part of Italy, and twice threatened Rome, broke out there, with all the violence at the commencement of the past year, and filled it with consternation. This visitation was equally unforeseen and sudden; it produced amazement, confusion and disorder; and the inhabitants, who perhaps, thought themselves invulnerable, seemed to have no other thought or desire than to escape from danger, and provide for their safety, by flight or by absolute insulation.

The enemies of our holy religion did not fail to profit by this occasion of insulting the piety of the Roman people. They tauntingly demanded, of what avail was the protection of the saints, since a city, enriched with their relics, had not been exempted from the stroke of the exterminating angel.

Let them exult in the evils to which we all have been exposed. For our part, convinced that afflictions may be means of salvation, let us patiently submit to the orders of Providence. The world is governed by general laws; and I am not more surprised that pestilence does not distinguish between the just and the unjust, than that the sun shines on both indiscriminately. The evils,

then, with which our path is beset, do not always come from the hands of an avenging God ; there are even some which He permits, that He may exhibit to men examples of sublime virtue.

Among the religious orders who devoted themselves to the care of those sick of the cholera, there are some above all praise, because their zeal put them above all fear. In this critical conjuncture they rose to the sublime elevation of their vocation. Such are the Fathers *Cruciferi*, the multiplied acts of whose charity will eternally live in the memory of the Romans ; all who hear of them will admire the bounty of Providence, who, in afflicting these countries with a new scourge, prepared for them, in the sons of Camillus of Lellis, an exhaustless source of consolation. Faithful to the vow they had pronounced at the foot of the altar, they prepared to fulfil the obligation they had contracted of assisting in death all who should claim their aid, even at the peril of their lives. They were seen, as long as this scourge lasted, ministering to the sick, and risking their own, to save their brothers' lives ; they succeeded in rescuing many of them from the grave, and prepared others for the eternity to which they passed.

As I am unable to compress into a letter all the edifying traits I have collected, in regard to the victims of the cholera, I will only mention what principally struck me, and leave to others the minute details, which although less striking, are not without great merit before God. I regret not to be able to mention among so many priests, and religious, a number of laymen, who associated themselves to their dangers and difficulties. As he who suffers becomes a member of Jesus Christ, I believe that God wished that his ministers should be particularly honoured with this care.

There exists a celebrated society, whose origin and

progress are not unknown to you. Founded by St. Ignatius, in the middle of the sixteenth century, it received, at its birth, the name of Jesus; because, like its divine model, it was to be exposed to contradictions and outrages. This society is as admirable, and almost as mysterious, as the church which it adorns; it is loved and adored by some, while to others it is an object of hatred and execration. Like the church, it also derives its strength from the intimate union of those who compose it; and, by a particular favour of the Holy Ghost, it finds within itself wherewith to refute all errors, solace all sorrows, and provide for all wants. This society, however, had its enemies, even in the Holy City. The false philosophy, which it had unmasked and almost annihilated; the tepidity, which it made blush, by the exact observance of its rule; the special protection of the Sovereign Pontiff, who finds among its members numerous ministers, always ready to go to the ends of the earth; the great confidence and credit, which the sincerity of its virtues, and the superiority of its lights, have obtained for it with some powerful personages: all these advantages had armed hell against it, and furnished pretexts for the most odious calumnies. God, however, was mindful of a congregation which he had possessed from its beginning; and while it was silently pursuing the great object of God's greater glory, the cholera came to place its heroic virtues in their brightest light.

In fact, what degree of devotedness could be desired, that was not manifested by the Jesuits in this critical conjuncture? What spectacle did they afford to Rome, and even to Europe; for upon Rome all Europe then fixed its eyes! Rising superior to the fears and weaknesses of nature, they were seen to run wherever contagion was to be found, and give abundant alms to the poor,

while they afforded consolation to the rich. You know that in those calamitous times the danger was almost equal, between him who suffered and him who assisted; they nevertheless placed themselves between the dead and the dying; they brought with them remedies for soul and for body; they heard confessions and administered extreme unction. They offered themselves to God to rescue fathers of families, and if their offer was not accepted, they received the orphans into their houses; they adopted them, and discharged towards them all the duties with which friends and relatives thought themselves dispensed. In a word, they evidently showed that they had no other ambition than the salvation of souls, and no other riches than what they were ready to apply to the necessities of the destitute. This was what Rome saw; and what Rome admired. The Romans now bless those against whom so much distrust had been sought to be inspired into them; and proud of possessing them, they rank them among their best benefactors.*

The gratitude of the Romans to the Jesuits does not make them forget the Capuchins, the Franciscans, the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the Fathers of Mercy, the canons regular of St. John of Latran, or the Brothers of St. John of God: it is then just that I unite all these venerable names; or those who have been the object of their solicitude, who probably owe to their care the life which they enjoy, would be justly displeased with me, if I omitted to express their gratitude.

* As a mark of their gratitude for the zeal and attention of the Fathers of the Society during the late visitation, the Romans have since presented six magnificent candlesticks to the altar of St. Ignatius — probably the richest in the world — in the church of the Gesù at Rome. The regularity and decorum of the public service in this church, the variety and grandeur of devotional exercises, together with the untiring zeal of the eloquent preachers who almost constantly occupy its pulpit, render it the most frequented of any of the churches in the eternal city.—*TR.*

My principal design being to show that the sanctuary of religion is also that of charity, I should not discharge my duty, if stopping at isolated instances of heroism, however admirable, which Providence generally reproduces in similar circumstances, I passed over in silence those estimable establishments, which charity long since founded, which it sustains with its exhaustless resources, and to which it daily gives a new development. Yes, my friend, my labour would indeed be incomplete, if, looking on Rome as a Christian and as a religious, I should say nothing of the abundant fruits which the spirit that pervades it has produced. I will then give you a sketch of these institutions; and if this picture is not entirely conformable to that drawn by some travellers, remember, that I write on the spot, and that, before writing, I have consulted authentic records, and examined men and things.

Among the charitable establishments of Rome, the *Monte di Pietà* is pre-eminent. Barnaby of Terni, an humble Franciscan, seeing with grief that the poor were often the prey of the usurer, conceived the idea of relieving their necessities, without encouraging idleness. He made his first effort at Perugia. His success equalled his expectations; and this institution, which was chartered by Leo X., the then reigning Pontiff, and subsequently protected by Paul III. and Gregory XIII., has been in our own days, specially favoured by Pius VII., and renders most important services to the least favoured class of society. It could not escape the political vicissitudes of the times; and hence it has been at one time prosperous, at another neglected. In the days of its prosperity, the sums it lent were so considerable, and the interest which it exacted so small, that if Rome had been then disposed for commerce or industry, it would have considerably facilitated enterprise. At present, despite

of past disasters, it sustains itself and bears goodly fruits ; but if, as Spina has well observed, a saving bank was united with it, which would be guaranteed by the state, and administered as in France, by a voluntary association — whose entire capital would pass from the hands of the depositor into those of the borrower, it would be still further improved. In taking from it the temptation of inspiring idleness, it would offer a reward to labour, an encouragement to industry.

The funds which this establishment has in circulation are about 220,000 crowns, and it receives every year about 200,000 pledges. With such means, of what improvement is it not capable, if it was administered by a more comprehensive zeal ?

Although the *Monte di Pietà* leaves much to desire, as well with regard to the management of its funds, as with regard to its administration which might be more in harmony with its object ; it is, however, true, that it has merited well of religion, which never ceases to encourage whatever may be useful to her children.

The best use which can be made of money, destined for religious purposes, is, doubtless, to furnish occupation, on public works, to the indigent who are able to work. Such labour has always a double advantage ; it augments social happiness by adorning public places ; and, what is not less important, it delivers the indigent from idleness, and elevates them in their own eyes, by changing into a salary the alms which they receive. Rome has been often accused of encouraging idleness, for the purpose of humbling the people, and thus more easily enslaving them. Rome has been represented under the colours of the most odious despotism, as dreading nothing so much as the affluence, which is the result of labour, and as only strong in the weakness, and rich in the poverty of the Romans. And yet this much calumniated Rome far

excels all other cities by her public works ; and I will add that nowhere have they been better paid for. The Popes Pius V. and Innocent XII. founded the committee of public works. Leo XII. gave them a new impulse, and, under this Pontiff, every labourer received elevenpence daily, besides bread. At the grand solemnities, their pay was doubled, besides which they received some meat, and a certain quantity of cloth. Pius VIII. consecrated 500 Roman crowns weekly to these works, and Gregory XVI., whose pontificate is no less encompassed with glory than it has been surrounded with difficulties, has raised it to 640 crowns, which makes 33,280 crowns yearly, taken out of the public treasury. The poor having, however, increased in such numbers, that it was found necessary to reduce the daily wages, and each labourer gets at present only sixpence halfpenny and a loaf of bread. You may hence infer that, at Rome, idleness, misery, and vagabondism, can find no other excuse than an invincible propensity to *do nothing*.

Of all the means which charity has discovered for succouring the indigent, there are none better, and, so to speak, more charitable, than those applied in the home of the poor. The relief which is imparted in public establishments only serves those who are admitted into them ; but domestic aid benefits the whole family. The father, who receives it, divides with his wife and children ; these become more dear to him ; the ties of nature are knitted more closely by this participation ; and all unite, with weeping eyes, to bless Providence for the relief afforded them. Add to this, that the portion of the indigent is, in this case, increased by whatever would be necessary to pay the poor-officers—a class of people always interested and sometimes hard-hearted enough to enrich themselves

by the spoils of the unfortunate. Pope Conon, in the seventh century, first instituted for himself an almoner, whom he specially charged to succour indigent families, either by paying them a fixed pension, or by privately supplying them with succour proportioned to their wants. His successors have imitated his example: and this office of charity is, at present, confided to a prelate, attached to the household of his Holiness.

The apostolic almoner is attentive to succour all species of distress. On the festivals of Christmas and Easter, and at the anniversary of the crowning of the Pontiff, he gives even to every prisoner, as also to those females detained in penitentiaries, a paulo, or about sixpence. The same alms is given to all the poor, and if the Popes are obliged to be content with wishing, like your good Henry IV., that the lowest of their subjects might have a chicken at Sunday's dinner, they at least endeavour to make the unfortunate forget their misery on these great solemnities, which are really festivals for them.

The holy and learned Pontiff, St. Gregory, admitted daily twelve poor men to dine at his palace. This practice, so Christian and so apostolic, having been suspended by the vicissitudes of time, was revived by Leo XII., who required his almoner to preside at the table where these twelve poor men were served. It is now thought more advisable to give them a sum equivalent to it, that their families may partake of its benefit.

The office of almoner has, moreover, many other charges; its revenues amount only to 22,800 crowns, furnished by the *Dataria*. These are entirely absorbed in works of charity.

You may easily see, dear Charles, from the details which I have given you, and which are drawn from authentic sources, that the Popes have always bestowed on

the indigent a large portion of the resources which they have had at their disposal. You will, at the same time, see that the seat of truth is the seat of charity ; and I hesitate not to assert, that all the beneficent establishments found in various countries, and which are so creditable to philanthropy, have derived their principles, however variously modified by time and place, from this apostolic almonry, of which I have endeavoured to give you an idea.* It is, then, to religion that we must refer all the good which is done to men, under whatever form it appears. It is in a spirit of religion that we must do good works, if we hope to obtain a reward for them.

Adieu, my dear Charles.

P.S.—The cholera, of which I have spoken at such length, has left after it distressing vestiges. The most affecting is undoubtedly that which is exhibited in the numerous poor orphans ; these innocent creatures have no other advantage than the unconsciousness of their destitution. Rome counts a great number of these orphans, and has opened for them an asylum, in which they are taken care of. This was a new object of charity, and required a new institution, to endure at least as long as the infancy of the orphans. Having exhausted all the resources which charity suggests, the Princess Borghese had recourse to an industrious speculation. This has been tolerably successful, but yet much remains to be done.

The Princess Borghese, the Countess of Lutzow, wife of the ambassador of Austria, and Lady Acton, are the life and soul of all the good works of Rome. These ladies ascend to the garrets of the poor, as if borne on

* See the synoptical tables of the charitable institutions at Rome, found at the end of this volume.

wings, and descend with still more joyous hearts, because they have dried up the tears of affliction, and poured the oil of mercy on human misery.

They are, indeed, three sisters of charity, whose only ambition is to serve Jesus Christ, in the person of the poor. The Countess of Lutzow brings up thirty poor girls in a house adjacent to her palace. She often visits and encourages them, and, by her kindness, inspires them with a love of virtue and industry.

LETTER XXI.

Other beneficent institutions of Rome.

Rome, April, 1838.

DID I not know the goodness of your heart, I would fear to abuse your patience by continuing my description of some of the charitable institutions with which Rome abounds. But as every thing that benefits humanity interests you, I will fearlessly enter into some details, which, although generally passed over, require to be known before we can estimate the spirit that presided at the formation of these institutions, and appreciate their worth and utility.

I have already said, that every species of misery which afflicts humanity, finds, at Rome, a remedy, a soothing balm and a refuge. Charity is here without ostentation; it does not oblige modest indigence to pay for its alms, by the shame which is inseparable from their publicity.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, at the foot of the altar of the Holy Sacrament, in the church of the *Santi Apostoli*, Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of

every salutary thought, inspired some fervent souls with the design of consecrating themselves to the relief of that class of the indigent, who suffer less from the wants of the present moment, than from the recollection of by-gone happiness. Father James Laynez, the second General of the Jesuits, approved of the undertaking, and gave it the benefit of his co-operation. It is not necessary to say, that they rendered most important service to this interesting portion of the distressed. I will content myself with adding, that their zeal, sustained by the patronage of Cardinals Barberini and Altieri, is at present no less fervent and enlightened than was the sublime and delicate feeling which first inspired it. Their emblem is beautifully touching:—Jesus Christ at supper with his apostles; that is, Jesus Christ giving himself to his disciples. What an example! what a precept! At least I see both in it; those who have adopted perceived it also.

There is another congregation, known under the name of the *Divina Pietà*, the principal object of which, like that of the confraternity of the *Santi Apostoli*, is to relieve retiring indigence. This congregation was founded in 1679, by a venerable priest, John Stanchi, of Castel-Nuovo, and had, for first protector, Cardinal Carpegna. I would not have made mention of it, on account of its similarity with that already described, were it not for an article in its statutes most creditable to those who formed them, viz.: “No member shall be required to give an account of the money confided to him for distribution; the names of the persons relieved are to remain concealed, and never to be registered.” I may be mistaken, but this clause appears to me to unite so much fine feeling and benevolence, that I could wish it were adopted in other countries, and that all charitable institutions were based on the principle of the *Divina Pietà*. In originating

this thought, the humble John Stanchi honoured both the poor, as suffering members of Jesus Christ, and the rich, as incapable of a dishonourable action.

The name of Carpegna is justly venerated. I have mentioned that of the cardinal, I will now add a few words on the Marquis and Marchioness of Carpegna. There was nothing remarkable in the lives of these illustrious persons; nothing to attract the esteem of the world, or procure for them the praise which their memory deserves, and with which I love to honour their ashes. Blessed with the gifts of fortune, they made no other use of them than in relieving the indigence of their brethren. Their domestic economy was so great, that the world taxed them with avarice. Death justified them, and raised the veil which concealed their good works from public observation. Their last will is a lasting monument of their charity; it contains the donation of all their property in favour of disabled old men, destitute widows, orphans, the blind and the lame, or those parents whose exertions would not be sufficient to supply the wants of their families. They desired that their liberality should tend to the encouragement of virtue, and ordered that their alms should be given only to those who would labour according to their ability. They were not to be imparted to the vicious, but to those who had the fear of God, who complied with their religious duties, who gave a Christian education to their children, and taught them the catechism. The cardinal vicar, Prince Odescalchi, was appointed by the testators executor of these holy bequests, and he continues to make the most judicious application of these legacies. He has been long accustomed to dispense liberal alms, beyond even what his private fortune allows. What happiness must he feel at this disposition of Providence, which, to recompense him for his own sacrifices, employs him to

be the minister of the benevolence of others, and to console a still greater number of the poor.

In a city so full of ecclesiastics, we naturally expect to find some benevolent institution, specially destined for the relief of the indigent among them. Among those, the establishment founded by Pierre Miré is prominent. Its founder gave the direction of it to twelve secular priests, who were to take charge of twelve poor clerics, to watch over them, direct their studies, and prepare them for the priesthood. These are then replaced by other indigent aspirants to the ministry. During forty years, Miré continued to exercise this benevolence, and at his death, left all his property, to ensure its continuance. Providence has since increased its revenues, which, at present, suffice for the education of a much greater number of ecclesiastics.

Those priests who have grown gray in the duties of their ministry, who have been only solicitous to lay up riches in heaven, and who, perhaps, have stripped themselves to clothe their brethren, have surely a strong claim on the public. They here find a house of retreat specially devoted to them; an asylum where they can pass the evening of their days.

Distressed young women are here the object of more charitable care than elsewhere. It is now six centuries since an association was instituted, under the patronage of Santa Maria Maggiore, for the purpose of enabling poor young women to settle comfortably in the world, instead of being obliged, by poverty, to pass their life in an unwilling, and therefore dangerous celibacy. So meritorious an undertaking could not but meet with encouragement. The association has gradually grown rich, and now fulfils its original institution. Every year it endows fourteen young women. St. Bonaven-

ture ordained that eight dowries should be given in the name of the most fervent members of the association.

Another association, of the same kind, called the *Arch-Confraternity of the most holy Annunciation*, originated in Rome, in 1460, under Pius II. Cardinal Torrecremata, who first conceived the idea of this new institution, formed a council of two hundred Roman citizens, who were to collect the offering towards rescuing poor young females from the dangers of their state. The candidates must be Romans, indigent, of good character, and born in lawful wedlock. Besides these conditions, it is required by the statutes, that from the age of fifteen years, they present themselves, with the necessary testimonials; and once they are received amongst the aspirants to partake of this bounty, they are subject to a strict surveillance. This regulation must have a very favourable influence on public morals. The day of the Annunciation they receive their dowry, and are permitted to kiss the feet of his Holiness in the church of the *Minerva*, from which they come out in procession, according to the ancient custom. This is one of the most interesting and imposing ceremonies at Rome.

Such young females as wish to embrace the religious life, and prefer a heavenly to an earthly spouse, are not debarred from partaking of the benefits of this institution. The convent into which they enter receives the sum, which otherwise would have been given to them. The dowry for those who wish to marry, is 40 crowns; for those who wish to enter religion, 60 crowns. These sums were much more considerable at the time of the first establishment of these institutions: at present, they are trifling. But the liberality of individuals generally supplies the deficiency, and Providence increases resources in proportion as they are needed. Without this, what

would become of charitable institutions? Let others admire the benevolence which originated them ; I admire much more the hand which sustains them: it is the hand of God.

In imitation of these associations, have been formed those of St. Apollina, of the Holy Rosary, of the Holy Redeemer, and, finally, that of the Immaculate Conception, in 1773. As they have the same end, they have almost the same regulations, and I have enumerated them merely for the purpose of showing how active and fruitful in resources is the charity of the Romans.

Among these resources, there is one which will almost scandalize you—the lottery ! Yes, my friend, the lottery—which your France, the centre of liberty, the focus of light, after much reflection, has effaced from the number of her institutions, and thus pilloried for ever—exists yet in Rome, and is not only tolerated, but sanctioned by the public authority. That serious inconveniences are connected with the lottery, and that some disorder results from it, is undeniable. This is, however, true of all human institutions, and we ought to distinguish between those that are necessarily bad, and those which become so by being abused. While we proscribe the one, we ought to give a salutary direction to the other. In France, and other countries, the lottery has been a source of public revenue. In Rome, the government derives no advantage from it. In the one case, then, I see an unequal bet—a speculation on cupidity, and, consequently, an unjust gain : here it is a tribute levied on the slaves of a foolish passion, and afterwards conscientiously restored to society. In France, the poor man, who took no part in the lottery, was not, on that account, less poor, because he had no share in the immense revenue it brought to the state. At Rome, on the other hand, the folly of the rich becomes the support of the poor, and rescues him, not unfrequently, from the horrors of despair. The lottery ceases to be a vicious

institution, when religion corrects its abuses ; and when, unable to eradicate the propensity of the gamester, she takes from it what renders it prejudicial, and endeavours to draw from the evil some small amount of good. This was evinced in the time of Benedict XIV. This great Pope, considering that the lottery was a deceitful lure for the people, suppressed it, and enacted penalties against those who should privately engage in it. What was the consequence ? The people disregarded these measures ; they manifested their discontent, and, in defiance of public authority, which the multitude of the violators rendered powerless, continued to play in private. In these circumstances, the Pope thought fit to re-establish it. Still, animated with the same spirit he had before displayed, he changed its nature, and transformed it into a work of charity. Among other regulations, he ordained that, at every drawing, five young women should get their dowry from the five principal prizes. This rule is yet observed—so that, every month, the name of the Roman fair one, for whom chance has procured a dowry, is seen attached to the successful number : and when she goes to the altar to give her hand and heart to the object of her choice, she is known by no other name than Miss Thirty-six, or Miss Forty-eight.

What do you think of this invention ? For my own part, I have applauded the suppression of the lottery, where it appeared to me an evil—a corroding cancer on the vitals of society. I cannot condemn it here, because its direction, object, and effects appear very different to me, and I regard the institution more useful than objectionable.

There is another institution which will certainly gain universal approbation : it is that which has for special object to defend the rights of the poor. The pious Ivo, whose virtue inspired it, was born in that part of France which best knows how to unite, with the faith of the

primitive times, that sweetness and urbanity, which are the effects of religion, and not the result of an egotistical and withering civilization. During his life he was the advocate of the poor; and after his death his virtues found imitators. Rome, which had given him every thing but birth, was the first to imitate him. The Roman magistracy put itself under his protection, and resolved to continue the work he had begun. Rome saw then, for the first time, formed within its walls, an association of men ready to fly to the relief of an unprotected class, whom the want of this world's wealth had often reduced to await, in a better world, that justice, which was not found on the earth; and who, for ages, were the victims of the rich and powerful. By means of this institution, the poor man would be enabled to defend his rights on equal grounds with his adversary, no matter how rich or powerful that adversary might be. Notwithstanding the temporal calamities of the court of Rome, this association still exists; and continues to preserve the poor from the snares of the rich, and the weak from the oppression of the powerful.

There are various institutions for the purpose of visiting, consoling, instructing, and correcting the prisoners. This object is, doubtless, excellent; and I believe that the charity of the Romans, in this respect, is as enlightened as the beneficence of the inventors of cheap soup. These latter look only to the physical wants of man, and make him work from morn to night, that he may acquire a few additional cents; while the former, reflecting that the prisoner has a soul to be saved, provide not only for his temporal wants, but afford him time for prayer and instruction, and thus endeavour to improve his moral state,

It is an edifying spectacle to behold, on Sundays and festivals, those processions of persons who visit the pri-

sons. Follow them into those abodes of misery and guilt. See their attention to the imprisoned; admire the mildness and familiarity with which they address them; the many motives of confidence with which they inspire them; the many arguments for repentance which they suggest.

The culprit, whom public justice condemns to the scaffold, finds here, not only priests to assist him in that awful moment, but also confraternities, whose duty it is to prepare him for the sacrifice, to accompany him to execution, to gather up his remains and give them Christian burial.

I know that similar associations formerly existed in France. They were destroyed in those disastrous days, when the guiltless and the guilty were sent to the same scaffold; and when it was not allowed to sympathize with suffering innocence. I should be glad to hear that they were re-established, and every where diffused; because every where there are crimes to punish. The executioner ought not to be the only one to bury the remains of those, whom repentance has perhaps justified, and who descend into the grave, with the same title as ourselves, to the fulfilment of the eternal promises.

After having laid before you the different forms by which charity in Rome adapts itself to all kinds of human misery, I will fearlessly ask you, if, in proportion to its population, there be a city in the world where the poor, the aged, the orphans, the unprotected female, and the prisoner, find so many asylums and resources? Do you think that your philanthropists, with all their fine theories, would ever realise results equally satisfactory? I have seen much of the world, but I have not seen any thing equal to it elsewhere; and this character alone would suffice, in my judgment, to merit for Rome the glorious names of "Holy City," and, "Capital of Chris-

tianity." Were pagans or barbarians to visit our capitals, it would not be our magnificent buildings and sumptuous palaces that would gain their hearts, and induce them to adopt our manners or religion, but the houses where so many fervent persons devote themselves to the service of their brethren. None would appear to them greater than those generous souls, who deprive themselves of every comfort but the luxury of succouring the wants of indigence ; and the city which would furnish them with most examples of this kind, would be, in their eyes, the seat of the true religion, and the queen of the universe.

France, you will perhaps tell me, possesses many charitable institutions. I know it ; and I am unwilling to detract from this portion of its glory. But as I belong not to either country, and, therefore, am not liable to the suspicion of partiality, I may be allowed to say, that Rome has the advantage of France in the number of the asylums she opens for suffering humanity ; by the sacrifices she has made to establish and endow them, by the zeal with which they are administered, and the privations which the Romans impose on themselves to enable them to maintain these. But what would she be, if she possessed what France enjoys—that treasure of which she is so worthy, but which she seems not to know ; and by the possession of which France is so much more fortunate—the institution of SISTERS OF CHARITY. Yes, I repeat it, with deep feeling and overflowing gratitude. Vincent of Paul has invested the charity of France with a character of dignity—a shade of delicacy, which it wants even in the capital of the Christian world. While wandering through the streets of this city, I look in vain for the snow-white linen cap, the countenance of angelic modesty, and the pure hands of untiring zeal that meet the eye so frequently in France. Such a sight would make me

weep for joy. What would I give to behold those modest virgins, whose children are the poor, and whose smiles only beam on the face of the afflicted. How often have I exclaimed with a feeling of disappointment: "Rome, great beyond all other cities. There is one thing wanted to the measure of thy excellence; thou oughtest to have produced Vincent of Paul, or have adopted his children."

I might add many things to the sketch I have made, but I fear to weary you by the length of my letter.

Adieu, my good friend.

LETTER XXII.

Executions at Rome.

Rome, April, 1838.

THERE are circumstances in which the civil magistrate is obliged to pronounce sentence of death: but, while he condemns the criminal, he must never forget that he has a soul to be saved. This is not forgotten at Rome.

Among the pious institutions which adorn the capital of the Christian world, and display in all its brilliancy that charity, which is the distinctive mark of catholicity, there is one specially consecrated to assist those condemned to undergo the last sentence of the law. It is called "the Arch-Confraternity of the Decollation of St. John the Baptist." It is composed of pious men, both lay and ecclesiastic. The Popes have endowed it with privileges and indulgences, in consideration of the service it renders to the unhappy criminals.

On the eve of the day of execution, the confraternity give notice by placards, put up in different quarters of the city, that the blessed sacrament will be exposed in their church ; and invite the faithful to come and implore a happy death for the convict. The same notice is given in all the monasteries, and the same invitation published. Afterwards they go through the city, dressed in their distinctive habit, which resembles a sack thrown over them, and collect alms for the purpose of getting masses said for the soul of the criminal.

The civil authorities give regular notice to the confraternity, when and where the execution is to take place. As soon as the proper officer of the confraternity receives this notice, he invites four or five of his brethren, of whom one must be a priest, to meet in the evening in the church of St. John, and thence to accompany him to the prison. Having recited some prayers before the altar to implore Divine assistance, they proceed two by two, to the prison, where they are received by the officers of government. They immediately repair to a small chapel in it, called *Conforteria*, where they put on their black habit and rough girdle. In an adjoining room the *providitore* assigns to each the office he is to discharge. Two are called assistants ; they have care of the spiritual wants of the condemned : one is to act as sacristan ; and the fourth is to write exact minutes of all that passes, from the moment the culprit hears the order for his execution until it is carried into effect. These minutes are subsequently registered ; and the archives of the confraternity, which reach back to an ancient period, contain much interesting and instructive reading.

At midnight the jailors visit the condemned, tie his hands, and make him ascend a private staircase, which leads to the *Conforteria*. At the top of this staircase is a room, where the notary of the government intimates to

him the sentence of death. When this is done, the brothers present themselves to him, embrace him, and holding before his view an image of Jesus crucified, and of the Mother of Sorrows, endeavour to diminish the bitterness of his feeling by every motive which religion suggests. This is ordinarily a terrific moment. The criminal is generally more affected by the sentence which he has heard, than by the consolations which are offered to him. When his violent feelings subside, they then commence to prepare him for a good confession, by suggesting salutary reflections. They interrogate him on the principal articles of religion, to see if he be sufficiently instructed ; but they are careful not to fatigue him by too lengthy instructions, as experience shows that such conduct only irritates and disgusts those who require to be instructed and consoled. They leave him for a time to himself. An interior voice then speaks to his heart ; and repentance procures for him the grace of reconciliation. When the condemned has finished his confession, he makes his will if he wishes, and declares in the same act, that he dies in the Catholic church ; that he pardons all who have injured him, and that he wishes to repair the evil he may have done his neighbour.

In the mean time the brothers recite in the chapel certain prayers, to obtain God's mercy for the unhappy convict. They communicate at one of the masses which is said very early in the chapel on the day of execution, and the convict himself is permitted to receive, by way of viaticum, at one of those masses.

In proportion as the fatal hour approaches, and the convict manifests dejection and prostration of his physical powers, the charitable exertions of the pious brothers are also multiplied. The litany of the saints is recited ; the stations of the cross are made ; and at the moment of departure, the Papal benediction is imparted to the un-

fortunate victim of the laws. He is also blessed with a relic of the wood of the cross. In the mean time, the remaining portion of the confraternity, having heard mass in their church, come in procession to accompany him to the place of execution. Before them is carried, between two yellow torches, an image of Jesus crucified, covered at the extremity with black cloth. On descending the steps of the prison, the condemned finds an image of the blessed Virgin, before which he kneels to pray. The assisting priest exhorts him to put his confidence in this Mother of Mercy. At the bottom of the steps he finds the before-mentioned image of Jesus crucified. The priest points out to him the Saviour's wounds, and recalls to his mind the infinite value of that blood, which was shed for the redemption of man.

It is but seldom that the condemned is unaffected by this preparation. Should he, however, prove obdurate, the efforts of the brothers and of the assisting priests are redoubled. They cast themselves at his feet, and implore him to have pity on his soul. Should all prove ineffectual, they endeavour to obtain a respite of some hours from the government. In the mean time, public and private prayers are offered up: other ecclesiastics, distinguished for their learning and piety, are called in, that they may endeavour to overcome his obstinacy. God generally blesses these efforts of truly Christian zeal. The culprit, whose obduracy seemed invincible, and struck horror into the hearts of the assistants, edifies them by giving all the marks of true contrition.

Let us follow the unhappy man. The hour is come. He gets into a cart, and proceeds to execution, with his back turned to the place where he is to die. Alas! in this we all—the virtuous no less than the vicious—resemble him. We turn away our eyes from the death which awaits us; the thought of death affrights us; and we are

hurried to the grave before we permit ourselves to reflect on it.

Two of the brotherhood accompany him in the cart, and while one presents to him a picture representing Jesus and Mary, the other seeks to keep alive the sentiments of piety, with which he ought to regard them. Thus his attention is turned away from the sight of the populace, which is but too eager to witness these sad spectacles.

The cart stops. The criminal is introduced into a hall hung in black, and lit only by a dim lamp. A crucifix is placed there. He embraces it; confesses again; receives absolution; while he repeats some ejaculatory prayers, among which are acts of faith, hope, and charity; the executioner binds his hands, leads him to the fatal spot, lets drop the iron, and satisfies human justice.

The unhappy man, who, perhaps, for a long time was the terror of his fellow-citizens, is now no more! His soul has appeared at the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge! His body is taken by the confraternity, who bring it to their church. After the customary funeral solemnities, it is interred in the cemetery.

Although works of mercy be an excellent means of sanctification, which God declares he prefers to holocausts, the brotherhood of St. John are too humble to attach any importance to their zealous efforts. They pray for themselves, after they have prayed for the soul of the deceased criminal; they recite the *Confiteor*, in acknowledgment and expiation of the negligences of which they may have been guilty; and before they depart, receive the benediction of their chaplain.

The intervention of these pious brothers, who sometimes belong to the first nobility of the city, prevents any insult on the part of the executioners, and makes the people regard the spectacle with terror and sym-

pathy. The scenes which precede and follow public executions elsewhere, are not witnessed at Rome; where, however, capital punishment is very rarely inflicted.*

LETTER XXIII.

Congregation of Roman ladies—Hospital of *Santo Spirito* in Sassia—Hospital of *Santo Salvatore*—Hospital of the *Santa Trinità*—Conservatorii for young women—Santa Maria in *Aquiro*—Hospital of *Santo Spirito*—Ospizio of St. Michael—Of St. Louis, for women without a home—Confraternity *della Morte*.

Rome, April, 1838.

FOREIGNERS, my friend, pay a willing tribute of admiration to a congregation of Roman ladies, of whom the Princess Doria has long been the superioress. This institution was established by Father Ponciléoni, and is composed of about twenty-four ladies, all belonging to the first class of Roman society, princesses, duchesses, and a few countesses.

What an aristocratic institution, you will say. You are right; and it is not proper, you think, to afford occasions of jealousy to the other classes of nobility, or to arrogate privileges which may wound their pride. Hear what are the privileges of this aristocracy. Two of these ladies are appointed to attend every Sunday the hospital of female incurables. They go there at an early hour; they clothe themselves in the dress of nurses, and visit the respective invalids. They comb their hair, wash

* More murders are committed in England and Ireland in the course of a few months, than throughout the whole of Italy in as many years.—*Lady Morgan's Italy*. London, 1821.

their hands, listen to their complaints, accept of commissions for their families, and give consolation and alms, according as they find necessary. Thus they go through all the wards. Whenever any of the association is obliged to be absent, the rest are always ready to supply the deficiency. A lady told me that after three months, the impression made on her by such a spectacle still remained; but their heroic charity is not, therefore, less lively or animated.

Among those ladies, some are peculiarly happy in discharging this charitable service; and it is gratifying to observe the satisfaction which the recurrence of their visits produced on the sufferers: there is a general cry of benediction and of love. Are you now disposed to declaim against this privilege of the most distinguished Roman patricians? I have not been able to give you the details of what these charitable ladies have to endure from their immediate contact with diseases, sores, corruption, and a multitude of desolating spectacles, which are the necessary, but deplorable consequence of misconduct and of misery.

When a vacancy occurs in this society, it is supplied from among a number of ladies of equal rank, who have for a long time solicited the honour and happiness of being admitted into it.

In no other place will you find so many noble institutions for the sick, the aged, and the infirm, as there are in the principal cities of Italy, and especially at Rome, where they are very numerous. The devout practices of the pilgrimages in former ages induced the greater part of Catholic nations to found hospitals here for their pilgrims and their infirm.*

Nothing is more worthy of observation than the grand

* See No. 1 of the Synoptical Tables at the end of the volume.

hospital *di San Spirito in Sassia*, which, for distinction's sake, is called the *Arch Hospital*. It was established by Innocent III., and has always been patronized by his successors. The building is large, and its revenues are considerable. Your hospitals in France are not, indeed, so rich, and yet the sick are better off in them. Saint Vincent of Paul has taught you how to open asylums for the infirm, in which an admirable order and economy reign. The poor man who enters them, wonders to find himself the object of such solicitude. He blesses the Sisters who attend him, and when he is restored to health, he quits them with tears.

In the hospitals at Rome, I have not observed this admirable spirit, although I do not wish to call into question the good dispositions and pious intentions of those who administer them. Such an employment will always be respectable. I say 'employment,' and although I regret to use the word, I know of none more appropriate. If I am not mistaken, those services alone are worthy to be called "good offices," "acts of devotedness," "works of mercy," which look to heaven, and to heaven only, for their reward.

I believe that those employed in the Roman hospitals discharge their duties with exactness; but the duties which are imposed on us by interest, are not so cordially observed as those to which charity obliges us. The first are cold, because they are matter of calculation; the others are active, and are not impeded by any peril, even by that of death, because they regard God alone. You may give to a sick person, who pays you, the medicine which the physician has prescribed; but, without a special grace, you will not assuage the bitterness of the remedy—you will not dress his wounds without repugnance—you will not make his bed without disgust, or lend a sympathetic ear to his complaints.

I cannot, then, but repeat the expression of my regret, that the venerable daughters of St. Vincent of Paul, (Sisters of Charity), who ought to be found wherever there is misery to be remedied, have not the administration of the Roman hospitals. In their hands, these establishments would become temples of charity and religion; and what else than a temple should be an asylum opened to misery and served by piety? Many reasons, derived from the climate and localities, are adduced to explain their absence; but, for my part, I know that a good Sister of Charity is every where the same; and I maintain that they would be the same at Rome as they are at Paris. Their presence would destroy abuses, which exist wherever they are not to be found. Yesterday I visited the hospital of *San Salvatore*, and as I perceived a degree of cleanliness in it that I have not seen elsewhere, I guessed at once that it was administered by sisters. I was not mistaken. In 1821, the Princess Theresa Doria Pamphili, whose name is here in benediction, conceived the idea of introducing Sisters of Charity from France. Some difficulties having arisen, she founded a society of *Hospital Sisters*, and gave them a rule, which was approved of by Leo XII. I have been edified by their modesty, their sweetness, and their zeal; and hoping that the Sisters of Mercy, as they are called, will one day do as much good in Italy, as those "of charity" do in France, I beg of God to bless and multiply this rising institution.

As Rome becomes the rendezvous of the catholic world in the year of Jubilee, she has prepared asylums for the penitents, whom piety conducts hither. The hospital of the *Santa Trinità* is then opened to them. They are received without distinction of country, on the attestation of their bishop or simple pastor, and are allowed to remain the time fixed by the founders. They are served

by religious men, and receive, at their departure, a considerable alms. With the religious, who have the care of this establishment, many men of distinguished families associate themselves, and emulate their charity to the poor pilgrims. In 1825, more than 200,000 pilgrims were received at *Santa Trinità*. How, you will ask, were they provided for? To consider the resources of this small state, there is, indeed, matter for astonishment; but the arm of God is not shortened, and the Saviour is the same now he was on the borders of Genesareth, when he said, "I have pity on the multitude, and I do not wish to send them home fasting. If I send them home fasting, they will faint by the way, for some of them have come a great distance." Yes; God never abandons those who quit all to follow him; and the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves is renewed oftener than we think.

There are many *conservatorii* (orphan houses) for young females, the rules of which display no less wisdom than delicacy. The children of the artizan, as well as the child of the reduced nobleman, is received there; but the one is taught a trade by which she can earn her subsistence, and the other receives an education suitable to the rank which her family held in society, and which she may one day regain.

The establishment of St. Maria in Aquiro is destined for those orphans whose parents enjoyed affluence. They are instructed in polite literature, and treated in a manner calculated to console them for the trials of life. Thus the different degrees of misery are distinguished, and charity makes itself all to all.

The hospital of *Santo Spirito*, of which I have already spoken, receives foundlings. Innocent III., towards the end of the twelfth century, horror-struck at the barbarity of so many mothers, who destroyed their own off-

spring in the womb, or cast them into the Tiber, ordered those innocent creatures to be received here. This was the first instance of a similar institution in Europe. Vincent of Paul, who, by a few words, founded a similar one at Paris, about the middle of the seventeenth century, had probably cast his eyes on that of Rome, or, what is more likely, was influenced by the same inspiration of charity.

Those persons of both sexes, who have been born out of the church, and may wish to enter its sacred precincts, find here an establishment known as the *Conservatorio dei catechumeni*. During forty days they are prepared for baptism, at the end of which time, they make their profession of faith. The men then quit the establishment, but the women may remain, if they please. If they marry out of it, they receive a portion of about 140 dollars, and in case they wish to enter religion, the convent of the Annunciation is obliged to receive them.

The *Ospizio* of St. Michael, founded by Sixtus V., enlarged by Innocent XII., and subsequently enriched by the Odescalchi princes, is a general rendezvous of misery and mercy. It is, at the same time, a *Salpêtrière* and a *Bicêtre*. It is the almshouse of *St. Quentin*, the *petits Menages*, and the *Incurables*.* You find there both sexes—all ages; these are well distributed and divided, without confusion or intermingling. In a word, it is an immense establishment; it is a master-piece of charity. The president and vice president, M. Tosti and Morichini, are prelates of rare virtues, whose names are mentioned in terms of admiration. The *studio of Tata Giovanni* receives abandoned orphans; it is the school of *Art et Metiers de Châlons*, with the addition of the religious direction which these tender plants receive. The founder of this house wished to provide for poor

* Names of hospitals and asylums in France.

orphan boys; his will limits his beneficence to the *poor*. He was himself a good artizan and an enlightened Christian; he wished to save these children of misery by accustoming them, from an early age, to industry, and, that he might not lose the fruit of his sacrifice, he wished that they should sanctify their labours by the practice of Christian virtue.

In the course of the seventeenth century, a holy priest, of the Odescalchi family, opened at *Santa Galla* an asylum for poor men, whom the want of home, or of money, obliged to lie out in the open air. He gave them a bed, supper, fire, and light. He served them with his own hands, mended their tattered garments, and, what was of still more consequence, spoke to them of God who had preserved them. This establishment yet exists; and instead of having suffered by the vicissitudes of time, it is wonderfully increased by the zeal of the Odescalchi princes, and under their wise direction.

St. Louis, near Santa Galla, receives, also, every night, women who are without a home. It is an establishment precisely similar to that just described. It was founded by a Florentine priest, whose name is worthy to be united with that of Marc-Antonio Odescalchi.

Rome contains many other charitable institutions, but it would be tedious to enumerate them: they are, besides, only copies of those already described. In conclusion, let me add that, in all these houses, I have remarked great prudence, a wise economy, and such a multiplication of resources as can only be attributed to Providence. "Charity," says M. de Chateaubriand, "this really Christian virtue, was unknown to the ancients: it first appeared on earth with Jesus Christ. It was the virtue which principally distinguished Him from the rest of men, and was in him the seal of the regeneration of the human race." If this be true, and all history confirms it, can you wonder

that God furnishes his vicar with resources to exercise a virtue, of which he has given so many examples, and which he so often recommended to his apostles.

Adieu, my dear Charles. I think I have said enough to prove that the spirit of charity is more generally diffused at Rome, than elsewhere. The *trait* with which I will conclude, shows that this spirit has here one of the distinctive characters of Catholicism; that it extends beyond the grave; and that death, in terminating the miseries of life, has not thereby placed a limit to its zeal.

There is, at Rome, a confraternity called *della morte e dell' orazione*. It has for object to procure sepulture for those inhabitants of the city or country who have been so unfortunate as to die in entire destitution. This confraternity reckons among its members, the most distinguished citizens. They are equally humble and charitable, and clothe themselves with the garment of a penitent, by which means they escape observation, and give themselves, without reserve, to the exercise of their heroic zeal. In 1598, under the pontificate of Clement VIII., after an inundation which carried away two arches of the triumphal bridge, and extended its ravages a distance of eighteen miles, these brothers ran to seek for the bodies that lay on the campagna—transported them to Rome, and gave them Christian burial. With this exercise of charity they united their own fervent prayers, gave liberal alms, and, above all, caused the sacrifice of the mass to be offered to God for the souls of those who perished.

May heaven preserve the Romans from similar occurrences! If, however, God were pleased to afflict them for a time, these brothers would, undoubtedly, manifest the same courage and self-devotion. Those Tobiases of the new law exercise a work of mercy, of which we do

not duly estimate the merit. We look for actions of *eclat*, such as ancient Rome offered to the view. Fools that we are, we only esteem the deeds which originated in vanity, and are recompensed by worthless admiration; whereas the good works which are practised in Christian Rome have God for their only object, and will have Him for their reward exceeding great.*

Adieu, once more, dear Charles.

LETTER XXIV.

On the Roman clergy—On the Blessed Virgin.

Rome, April, 1838.

You have, doubtless, admired the zeal with which the Romans apply a remedy to every evil; and you have seen that this zeal has the love of God for its principle. Now, I ask you, is it likely that a clergy, which co-operates in so many good works—which sustains so many charitable establishments—which is a perfect model of charity, and thereby, according to the words of our Saviour, fulfils the whole law—is it probable that such a clergy should give scandal, by the irregularity of their morals, or afford an occasion to the invectives which

* In Rome, at present, there are about one hundred confraternities of various denominations, among which almost every native is enrolled. The main difference between the associations of Catholics in Rome, and the clubs and societies among Protestants in Great Britain, is that, with the former, religion always forms the constitutional basis, and is, at the same time, the strongest connecting link of their union. Physical advantages, however, are not wholly neglected. Each confraternity has, for the exercise of its religious rites, an independent oratory, wherein on festival days the *fratelli* assemble to recite the office of the Blessed Virgin, receive the sacraments and hear a sermon, usually delivered by their own chaplains.—*Reminiscences of Rome*, p. 38.

are sometimes uttered against them? I will not undertake to answer these charges; I know that men more readily believe falsehood than truth; and were I to enter into a discussion, I should be obliged to depart from that gravity, which my character, my rule, and many other considerations, impose on me. However, as every Christian is a soldier, when the church, his mother, is attacked, I should regard myself as an accomplice in the crime, a deserter of the church, and unworthy of her communion, if, after having passed many months at Rome—having been admitted to the court of the Sovereign Pontiff—having closely examined the different orders of the clergy—and visited the greater part of the religious houses, I were not to raise my voice against imputations which compromise the Holy See, and tend to weaken faith.

I have too profound a veneration for the Vicar of Jesus Christ to notice the reproaches made against him; his situation is his best defence. It is an ægis against which the shafts of calumny fall harmless. But the cardinals and the other prelates, less elevated than him, and charged with the examination of a multitude of affairs, sometimes even ministers of rigorous justice, are more exposed to the observation of the people. They are often censured, and every thing connected with them made the subject of malignant invective. I am personally acquainted with a great number of them; and I am happy in being able to possess friends, both in the sacred college, and in the prelacy. Were I to communicate my sentiments on their merits to the public, I need only mention what my eyes have seen and my ears have heard: but their humility and modesty impose on me restraints I would gladly disregard.

O thou, whom I dare not name, and who dost prefer the ashes of penitence to the glory of worldly grandeur;

—thou who, in the midst of the occupations imposed on thee by the different branches of the administration confided to thy care, still keepest thy eyes continually raised to heaven, and dost continually sigh after the happiness of enjoying God; why cannot I raise the veil that conceals thy heroic virtues from public observation! * And thou young prelate, who holdest the first rank among the Roman prelates—thou whom I have seen, while an infant, in the arms of the best of mothers in that city—where near the tomb of St. Rosalia lie the ashes of the mother of my own children—why am I forbidden to speak of thy angelic piety—to manifest the elevation of thy sentiments, the variety of thy knowledge, and the multifarious qualities which thy prudence unites in harmonious concord! † I will not, then, mention any person: but I must be allowed to say, that many princes of the church, after they have appeared in the day in all the magnificence with which, as public dignitaries, they are invested, put on at night the garments of penance, and weep before God for the sins of the people. I lately visited a cardinal who was ill; I found him lying in a splendid bed, such as his dignity seemed to require; although I had the most certain knowledge that he passed his tedious nights on a simple mattress, far from the magnificent couch in which he was wont to receive visitors. His *valet de chambre* was the sole witness of these austerities.

There is in the sacred college a cardinal‡ known to all Europe, who unites with a sublime piety the *gift of tongues*, of which he speaks about forty, with a facility and correctness that astonishes those who hear him. One

* The late Cardinal, now Father Charles Odescalchi, of the Society of Jesus.

† Monsignore Acton.

‡ Cardinal Mezzofanti.

day, speaking on this subject to a holy prelate, intimately connected with the cardinal, I observed, that nothing of the kind had been seen since the day of Pentecost. He answered, that it was an evident gift with which God had rewarded his zeal. When a simple priest, he dedicated himself to the service of the sick in the hospitals, where he passed his days and nights in administering the consolations of religion to the sick. He was afflicted at not being able to understand the foreign soldiers who were brought there, or to make himself understood by them : and he resolved to apply to the study of languages, imploring God with tears to facilitate their acquisition for him. The God of charity heard his prayer, and rewarding his noble and pure design, communicated to him the talent which makes him the most extraordinary man of his age.

As for the clergy, both secular and regular, I can assert that many holy and learned men are to be found among them. If in so great a number of ecclesiastics there be some exceptions, the church is the first to condemn them ; and whenever such evils occur, it should be our duty to weep with her over them. Since their character does not elevate them above the condition of fallen nature, let us at least not magnify their faults, and let us be especially on our guard not to attribute to the entire body the failings of some of its members. Notwithstanding the invectives of the enemies of the clerical order, this body will be always the most respectable class in society, because most faithful to its principles, which are unchangeable. The impious know this well ; but they sport with the credulity of the crowd, and act on the principle of their grand patriarch : “ Lie, lie, something will be believed.” In attacking the Roman clergy, they attack the universal church. In order to be convinced of this, it is enough to observe, that the reproaches which

are addressed to them are precisely the same as those made to us, under different terms, by our separated brethren. They are fanatics, say they; they excite the people; they make them adore the Madonna.* But let me ask, what is the fanaticism of which they accuse them? Have they ever seen them teach new doctrines, preach up bad morality, or subject sinners to unbecoming penances? For my part, I believe, it would be difficult to find a more indulgent and conciliating clergy—one which better recalls to memory the mercy of our Saviour; or confessors who dispense the graces of which they are the depositaries, with more discernment and prudence. They wish, indeed, to propagate the faith; but did not Jesus Christ say to his apostles: “Preach the Gospel to all nations?” Because they acquit themselves of this duty, because they will not make the law of God conform to our morals and usages, they are called fanatics, and are accused of exciting the people.†

Be not deceived by them, my friend. Those who declaim against the priests of the Lord, for teaching the people the truths of eternal life, would be satisfied if they only said to them: “Read the Bible.” And yet the Holy Scripture is not as clear as they affect to believe; it is not always easy to determine its sense. To wish that reason should be its sole interpreter, is to run the risk of having as many interpretations as there are individual readers, and consequently as many creeds as there are consciences. Besides, all has not been written; it is not enough to believe and practise what is contained in the sacred books. Hence it is that the Catholic church reveres tradition as the second channel of the revelation,

* The Italian name for the Blessed Virgin.

† The Roman clergy form a most learned, zealous, and exemplary body of men.—*Reminiscences of Rome*, p. 150.

which God has made, and from which we derive the knowledge of many points of doctrine that are not found in the Scripture.

It is also by the abuse of a simple expression, that the innovators endeavour to weaken, in some hearts, devotion to Mary. As long as they said that the clergy made the people honour Our Lady with special veneration, no one found anything in that which was not just and salutary : because it is an established usage of the church, and those of her children, most eminent for learning and sanctity, have taught and practised it. This name of our Lady (Notre Dame) lost nothing of its sweetest in the *Madonna* of the Italian language. They have, in some manner, parodized it by translating it into French, by the barbarous word “*Madone*,” at the mention of which, the smile of ridicule curls on the lips of impiety.

Heartless men ! if you respect not her whom the Jesus gave you as a mother—in whom God has done great things, and whom all ages have called blessed—respect, at least, I conjure you, the refuge of sinners, the consolation of the afflicted !

We never think of giving to Mary the same worship as we give to her Son. The handmaid of the Lord would refuse the adoration that belongs exclusively to Him. We only lay before her our necessities, and invoke her protection ; because we know that she will not reject the unfortunate who implore her aid, and that she is the canal by which the most abundant graces are communicated to men.

“ O Virgin Mary ! the worlds were not yet in being—God had not scattered them through the immensity of space, like grains of sand on the sea-shore—and yet even then, thou wert, for this holy and powerful God, an object of complacency and love ; and, already, in the splendour of his eternal throne, he prepared thy magni-

ficent destinies of glory, of purity, and of maternal love. May all creatures bless thee !

“ O Virgin Mary ! the worlds did not yet exist—God had not scattered them through the immensity of space, as grains of sand on the sea-shore—and already, from the eternal heights, God beheld man created, innocent, fallen, and raised again by a Redeemer. In a mysterious council, the august Trinity chose thee to be the Mother of this Redeemer, who was to be a Man-God ! May all creatures bless thee !

“ O Virgin Mary ! Thou art the Mother of the Incarnate Word. Never did the sin of Adam sully thy innocence ; never could the serpent, whose head thou didst crush, say to thee : ‘ Thou art mine.’ Thy soul, pure as the light, was never sullied by the least exhalation of human frailty. Thou wert conceived, born, and always didst remain, immaculate. Thy stainless sanctity shines in eternity, like the stars in the firmament. May all creatures bless thee !

“ O Virgin Mary ! when the blood of thy Son flowed down the cross on the guilty earth—when thou didst offer him to the Divine justice for the salvation of the human race—this Son, exhausted by suffering, proclaimed thee mother of all men ; all men were represented at the foot of the cross, in the person of the well-beloved disciple. At that solemn moment thou didst doubtless say, as at the incarnation of the Word : ‘ Be it done to me according to thy word.’ May all creatures bless thee !

“ O Virgin Mary ! Mother of God and of men ! thou art indeed blessed in all places and at all times. The mariner invokes thee on his wave-tossed bark, when about to be engulfed in the abyss of waters ; the warrior carries thy image as the most secure buckler, to guard him against the perils of the combat ; the Levite and the solitary implore thy assistance, to enable them to resist

the rude assaults of passion ; the mother consecrates to thee her first-born child ; the dying Christian fixes on thee his eyes ; kings lay their crowns at thy feet ; priests and people all unite to celebrate thy greatness. May all creatures bless thee !

“ O Virgin Mary ! mother of God and of men ! from the height of heaven, thou dost extend thy mantle on the nations that invoke thee—on the innumerable children in this valley of tears, who sigh after, and raise their eyes to thee. None escape thy maternal care. Thou dost see them : thou dost reckon them in the bosom of God, by the light of God, as the shepherd sees and counts his flocks in the noontide ray. May all creatures bless thee !

“ O Virgin Mary ! mother of God and of men ! after God thou shalt be the first object of my song. As long as I can praise and bless here below, I will praise and bless thee. And when my icy tongue shall cease to form sounds—when my heart shall feel the grasp of death, and cease to beat, I will for eternity praise and bless the thrice holy God, and the august mother of God and men.* Amen.”

Adieu, my dear friend ; I am about to visit St. Mary Major's.

* In almost every shop or dwelling in Rome is to be found an image of the blessed Virgin, with our infant Saviour, before which the devout will seldom pass without saluting them with respect ; and many a poor artisan would rather go to bed supperless, than not have wherewith to purchase oil for the lamp of his Madonna. Often times I have met with companies of men and women returning to their homes after the labours of the day, reciting the Rosary together, or singing alternately the praises of that pure and immaculate lady, “ Our tainted nature's solitary boast.”

At eventide, especially in summer, after listening to the simple strophe, “ *Evviva Maria ! e chi la credò,*” which the people are so fond of chaunting before their lamp-illuminated Madonnas in the public streets, I have sometimes been induced to exclaim, with our English poet :

“ O Virgin Mother of our gracious Lord !
Thou, at whose shrine all kings, all nations bend,

LETTER XXV.

Public instruction at Rome—Ladies of the Sacred Heart.

Rome, April, 1838.

I INTEND to speak to you, dear Charles, of the state of public instruction at Rome. Although I will only touch on this matter, I will, however, give you as much information as will enable you to repel the imputation of ignorance that is sought to be fixed on the Roman people.

Walking one day in the most ancient quarter of Rome—where we yet find most of the old Roman character, decisive, somewhat rude, and even a little ferocious; where the countenances yet remind you of Cato and Cincinnatus, aye, and even of Brutus; where the plough is not yet despised, and where the carbine and poinard are sometimes used; where a young man gracefully plays with the stiletto, and pronounces with enthusiasm the sacred names of the Janiculum and the

Mother of mercies, who thy aid dost lend,
To lips that hail thee with the heart's accord !
Solace of sinners, load-star ever nigh,
Whose saint-like feet the serpent's head have crushed,
How much I love, when all rude winds are hushed,
And silverie moonbeams light the motlie skie,
Beneath high heaven's blue vaulted canopy,
In hallowed stillness to invoke thy aid,
And feel my cares released, my sorrows fly,
For but to hail thee once, O spotless Maid !
Seems a bright ray of hope in realms on high,
Where pain dissolves in joys that never fade."

Forster's Circle of the Seasons.—Reminiscences of Rome.

Capitol; in this quarter, where the countenances are not the same as those on the other side of the river; where, in fine, there is more of the Roman, and perhaps, also, more of the Christian character—walking in this district, I was looking at and examining every thing, when my eyes rested on a beautiful and elegant pavilion rising on a small eminence. I wished to know who was its owner, and I learned from an aged man, that it had been lately purchased by French nuns. I urged him to tell me of what order they were? “They are all princesses,” says he: “and their mother abbess is cousin of the king of the French.” “Do you know her name?” asked I. “I do not know her family name; but since the cholera, she is called the *Aumonière*.” The old man had excited my curiosity, without being able to satisfy it. I hastened to recross the Tiber, and learned that the congregation of the ladies of the Sacred Heart at Paris, who have been long established at Trinità de Monti, had lately purchased the Villa Lanti, for a noviciate, and that the superioress general had come to open, and, as it were, consecrate it by her presence. The good old man was right in calling her *l’Aumonière*, for she has gained this title by her charity at Rome, where she is the mother of a crowd of orphans. As to her relationship with the king of the French, he was not quite so accurate. Perhaps he wished to insinuate that he regarded generosity as the virtue of kings; and I believe it to be such. Be that as it may, the mother abbess is simply the good and respectable Madame Bara. I was rejoiced to hear, what others doubtless knew long since, that the congregation of the Sacred Heart, of Paris, had been introduced into Rome by the enlightened zeal of Cardinal Lambruschini, and that this establishment had been approved of by Leo XII., who was perfectly aware of the wants of our times, and who sought to supply them. I offer, then,

my most ardent wishes for the success of this society, and I rejoice to see it established in the capital of the Christian world. Trappist as I am, I love to see intelligence and piety adorned with the graces of education. It is a vesture which well becomes them, and which, in our times, is absolutely necessary.

The ladies of the Sacred Heart have, at present, three houses at Rome. The first, the *pensionnat* of the Trinità de Monti, which may be called an academy for the daughters of the Roman nobility. It is an ancient convent on Monte Pincio, and has attached to it a charming church, beautifully ornamented, and whose vaulted roof resounds with seraph strains, chaunted by these chaste spouses of Christ. The gardens are extensive, and laid out with admirable art. The superioress, Madame de Cauzans, directs this establishment with wisdom and amiability; she is loved by those who live under her rule, and esteemed by all who know her. These ladies have taken the care of another house, that of Santa Rufina, in Transtevere. They devote themselves to the education of the children of the poor; their task is a difficult one, as in this quarter of the city learning is not much esteemed. What patience must they have to overcome the indocility of those small, but stubborn creatures, who readily learn the Angelus and the method of saying the Rosary, but care not to go much farther!

Their third establishment is that of the Villa Lanti, where, as I have already observed, they have laid the foundation of a noviceship for the Roman province. This house is delightfully situated on the most elevated point in the suburbs; it exhibits the Campagna stretching out in the distance. What a prospect! No picture can approach it. Thence the eye can range over Rome with all its wonders. I had before me, and almost at

my feet, its river, its domes, its belvederes, its various towers, and its imperishable coliseum. The young ladies who have preferred its retirement to the magnificent villas of the city have not assuredly lost any thing by the change. In exchange for the productions of art, they find a rich and varied nature, citron and orange groves, long extended valleys, an immense perspective, and a pure atmosphere, which much resembles that of Frascati. The ladies who reside there are very courteous to strangers, and, through the veil of modesty, exhibit the most estimable qualities.

The Roman College, which Leo XII. restored to the Jesuits, together with all the privileges it formerly enjoyed, is, without doubt, the most perfect thing of its kind. It is an university, and the various branches of literature and science — except law and medicine — are taught gratuitously in it. The degrees of doctor of arts and doctor of divinity are conferred in it. The students of various colleges attend the lectures, which are delivered here, and more than two thousand youths frequent its schools. This college contains a large library, where many precious manuscripts are preserved; as, also, a museum of antiquities, called after the name of its learned founder, Kircher; and a well-furnished observatory. This college is remarkably well kept; regularity and exactness preside over all its exercises; zeal and amiability are united in its teachers, and its youth exhibit most edifying docility and respect. I must acknowledge that I was surprised to find, under so hot a sky, so much modesty and order, even in the externs who frequent this college. But the Jesuits are everywhere the same; their success in teaching is incontestable; and their superiority in this respect is sufficient to impose silence on their adversaries. May their happy disciples never forget the lessons they receive, and honour their masters

Truth will come out.

as much by the solidity of their virtues, as by the variety of their acquirements !

The *Sapienza* is the Roman university, which is, however, more celebrated by the recollections of the past, than by its present success. The professors, some of whom are laymen, others clergymen, do not constitute a body, which is always prejudicial to the unity of system. Still it continues to produce excellent subjects, because great talents need only to be put on the way ; they soon leave others behind. The organization of the *Sapienza* seems to me too much like that of a French school of medicine, or of a public school in Germany. I am particularly displeased to see those who aspire to the ecclesiastical state confounded with others, who are to exercise a profession purely civil. Their instruction and mode of living ought to be different ; for, the rules which are adapted for young seculars do not appear to me sufficient to prepare worthy ministers of the altar.

Besides the "Roman College" and the "*Sapienza*," there are here various secondary establishments, where select masters teach the elements of literature. The poor have schools where they can send their children, so that the father of a family, who leaves his offspring to remain in ignorance, is more culpable in Rome than elsewhere. The number of free-schools is almost infinite,* and the proselytism for instruction is become one of the characteristics, not merely of the higher orders, but of all pious people. I repeat it, then, my dear friend, and that with a deep conviction of its truth, that Rome is the seat of science as well as of faith. Religion, guided by the Holy Spirit, who is a spirit of light, opens here its source for both sexes, for all ages, and for all conditions. It combats ignorance and refutes errors ; and, although

* See Synoptical table, No. 4, at the end of this volume.

calumniated, it labours not less to form doctors and literati, than apostles and confessors.

Adieu, my dear Charles.

LETTER XXVI.

Scene in a chapel of the Jesuits—Chartreuse of Rome.

Rome, April, 1838.

You would wish to find more order and more connection in my letters ; but I have already told you that I write without any pretension ; and when, at evening, I have succeeded in communicating to you the impressions made on me during the day, I look on myself as having discharged my duty. I do not seek to delight you by my style. On the contrary, I use all the liberty that epistolary correspondence permits, and I only wish to interest you.

Yesterday evening, at the Ave Maria, or the commencement of night, I casually went into a chapel, connected with the Roman College, and directed by the Jesuits. After having assisted at the recital of some prayers, which were of an austere and almost Trappist character, I listened to a very solid instruction on the sufferings of our Saviour. I expected that the exercises would terminate by benediction of the Holy Sacrament, and that the congregation, which consisted entirely of men, could then retire in peace ; but suddenly, and as if it were by enchantment, the lights were put out, and all remained in darkness. What, thought I to myself, what can this be a prelude to ? Presently I heard the rattling of keys, and the door close with a crash. This, thought I, is quite an adventure ; what can they be about ? I

listen to every sound. For three or four minutes, all was silent as the grave. At length, I hear these solemn words, pronounced by a voice which was admirably suited to the occasion: "Christ has died for us: he has expiated our iniquities. After the example of St. Paul, let us accomplish, by the mortification of the flesh, what is wanting of his passion. Let us offer our bodies in sacrifice, and obtain not only the pardon of our sins, but the delivery of the most destitute soul in purgatory." At once, some voices began to chaunt the *Miserere*, which was accompanied by a shower of lashes, of disciplines, and other penitential instruments! What a moment for me! What was my surprise! As a Trappist monk, I was not afraid of the discipline, and yet I could not overcome a certain feeling of horror; for the holy austerities of my convent had never produced so profound an impression on my soul. It would be impossible for me to describe to you my feelings or my thoughts at that time—the reproaches I made myself, or the resolutions I took. This penitential act lasted while the *Miserere* was being slowly and seriously sung; it even went beyond that, for the fervor of the penitents was not satisfied until the bell rang three times; the first and second sound not having been heard, or, at least, heeded.

I hesitated, somewhat, before imparting this anecdote to you, and I at length determined to do so, because I reflected that you are a Christian, and that you think not like the world, in the midst of which you live. Some young worldling, who has never reflected on sin, or its punishment, will say: "Wherefore afflict the body, and add to its sorrows? Man is made for happiness, and, to torment thus one's self, is to depart from our natural destination. Such excesses may have been preached by ignorant monks, but reason has interpreted the Gospel, and widened the way to heaven." What would I gain

by answering such people? To open their eyes, a power superior to mine is needed. I refer them, then, to St. Paul, whose example authorises these austerities, who preached them, and promised life to those who would employ them to subject the body to the spirit, and the spirit to God.

I will say a word to you about the convent of the Char-
treux, at Rome. This is not a digression; we cannot speak of the necessity of penance, without thinking on those religious who exercise its holy rigours. This convent is at one of the extremities of the city, and is placed amid the shapeless ruins of Diocletian's baths. It is, indeed, beautiful; but its beauty, like that of the king's daughter, is concealed within. The cloister, of which Michael Angelo designed the plan, is of remarkable extent, regularity, and richness. The ground which it encloses is carefully cultivated, and furnishes the house with the necessary vegetables. It is shaded by superb orange trees. The church is a master-piece; not, indeed, its exterior, for it is almost invisible, but its interior, which is of vast extent: it is paved with precious marble, and adorned with admirable paintings. Among these, the martyrdom of St. Sebastian, by Domenichino, is pre-eminent. What poetry and expression are seen both in the whole piece and all its details! What more sublime than the countenance of the saint, who is being attached to the tree! Some of his archers present themselves to torment him, while he raises his eyes to heaven, where he sees the Saviour, who prepares for him a crown. With difficulty could I tear myself from the spot. This convent has much interested me, especially as it is inhabited for some years back by French anchorites of the grand Chartreuse, who have made of it an asylum of penitence, and a school of sanctification.

Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER XXVII.

Tivoli—Subiaco—Accident—Sacro Speco—Grotto of St. Benedict.

Sacro Speco, 8th of May, 1838.

THAT a descendant of those illustrious men, whose venerable names and superior merit are incontestable, should seek to behold the spot where his fathers lived; and that, full of the thought of their greatness, he should wish to ascend to the cradle of his race, is not only a natural, but a laudable sentiment. How could I be exempt from this feeling, my friend, when, in the midst of the affairs that occupied me at Rome, I remembered that within forty miles of me was the grotto, where the founder of the monastic life in the west had passed many years. In the neighbourhood of this ever venerable grotto, he caused many cells to be erected, and only quitted it to found on Mount Cassino the celebrated monastery, which has been since the head seat of his order.

A sentiment, however, still stronger attracted me towards this holy solitude: it was the feeling of my own dignity. Yes, my dear friend, as an unworthy son of St. Benedict, I felt the necessity of renewing myself in the spirit of my vocation; and I thought that the monastery in which this grotto is enclosed, and which is, therefore, called *Sacro Speco*, would speak powerfully to my soul, and suggest most salutary reflections. This holy pilgrimage, which is interesting even to strangers, had for me peculiar attraction. The places signalized by the presence of those whom we venerate, however removed from us by time, fail not to make a profound im-

pression on our soul. We hope to find there the trace of their footsteps, and we easily imagine that the caves will whisper to us the thoughts, that once occupied the minds of their holy inhabitants.

An additional motive determined me not to defer this pilgrimage, on which I had already resolved. We were on the eve of that week, which the Greek and Latins have united to call the Great Week, on account of the greatness of the mysteries that are commemorated in it. It was in these days that death was overcome, and that heaven was open to man, who thereby was made the companion of angels. A few years before, I had the happiness of passing this week near the Holy Sepulchre; nay, in the Holy Sepulchre itself. This image could not easily be effaced. Yes; I yet seemed to behold the place where Joseph had laid the lifeless body of the Saviour; but what could restore to me the calm, the silence with which I was surrounded, and that obscurity, which so well represented the darkness that covered the earth when all was consummated. Occupied with these thoughts, I wished to avoid the multitude of strangers who crowd to Rome during these days, and who are for the Catholics a source of inexpressible vexation. They come to behold the ceremonies of the church; and I go away not to be a witness of their scandals. Besides, as I have already told you, I could not behold unmoved all that is sacred in religion insulted, or bear the contrast between their indecent laughter and our pious lamentations. And yet, if you follow them, as they issue from the Sixtine Chapel, you will see them visit with respect the tomb of the Scipios. These strangers, my dear friend, have not, indeed, the same God with us!

Before any one can take up his residence, or even pass a night, in the convent of the *Sacro Speco*, he must obtain the permission of the holy father, without which he

will not be received. It is the only monastery in Christendom where such a formality is required. Having accordingly sought for and obtained it, I set out from Rome.

Tivoli lay on my way. This city existed when Eneas landed in Italy, and its origin is referred to the heroic times. It is situated six leagues from Rome, on an agreeable eminence, from which a variety of beautiful prospects may be seen, diversified by the agreeable mixture of rivers and trees, ancient ruins, and modern palaces. The situation, the fertility of its soil, and good air, engaged the ancient Romans to build their country houses in the environs, in which they took great pleasure, and where they were wont to seek refuge against the summer heats. The worship of Hercules was solemnly established here; and under the porticoes of his temple, according to Suetonius, Augustus often administered justice.

Tivoli is watered by the Anio. This river, better known now under the name of Teverone, takes its source in Mount Trevi, near the confines of the Abruzzi, and flows at first in a large valley, enclosed on both sides by slightly elevated hills. Shortly before it arrives at Tivoli, it confines itself between two hills, and finding a perpendicular rock, precipitates itself from an elevation of forty to fifty feet in a basin, which it has cut for itself, and from which it issues with rapidity, to form, further on, what are called the Cascatelle.

Sixtus V., towards the end of the sixteenth century, constructed, at vast expense, a great wall to divide these waters, and render the cascade more beautiful. He was successful; and nothing could be seen more picturesque than this waterfall, which travellers admired and a thousand times described. The present Pope, considering that these waters caused sometimes great evils, and

that it was a paramount duty with him to interest himself for his subjects, caused Monte Catello to be perforated, and opened a new passage for the Anio under its vaults. By this work, which was accomplished in three years, and which is worthy of the ancient Romans, he has secured the Tivolese from the danger of inundations, and acquired an additional title to their gratitude. To transmit to posterity the remembrance of the danger to which they had been exposed, and of the benefactor who delivered them from it, the inhabitants of this city have struck off a large medal. On one side the waters are seen falling down from a great elevation; on the other, they issue from a grotto and exhibit a tranquil surface. Around are these words: *Tiburtes, Catillo perforato, inducto Aniene, servati, Anno Domini MDCCCXXXV.*

Among the ruins, which are in the environs of Tivoli, is the country-house of Maecenas, of which the stables and one apartment are tolerably well preserved. They are large vaulted rooms, above which are other vaults, surmounted by an open gallery. These buildings are yet likely to last long; the masonry work has not, as yet, felt the tooth of time.

Here and there we meet with shapeless piles of brick, fragments of statues, and broken columns. It is all that remains of the beautiful houses formerly inhabited by Horace, Tibullus, Sallust, and other illustrious men.

Below Tivoli are the ruins of the famous villa of Adrian, which was three miles in length, and somewhat more than a mile in breadth. It was a city, and was sometimes called Tivoli Vecchio. After having run over Greece, Egypt and Asia, the emperor wished to collect here all the curiosities of the several countries through which he had travelled. The temple of the Egyptian Neptune, called Canope—the Lyceum, the portico, and the *poicile* of Athens, were found here;

as also a horse-course, a naumachia, many theatres and palaces, long aqueducts and vast gardens; there were Elysian fields and Tartarian gulfs—in a word, the whole kingdom of Pluto; for Adrian, who had himself given the plan of this villa, and who wished to include all within its precincts, had made canals to represent Cocytus and Phlegeton. To render the illusion complete, the artists had sculptured the punishment of Prometheus, of Tantalus, and of some other great criminals. What now remains of these proud edifices, which seemed to bid defiance to time, and promised to remain for ever on the soil which had seen them rise? Scarcely eighty years had passed away, when Caracalla transferred many of its statues to his baths. His successors imitated him, and took thence what suited them. Then came the Goths, and completed its destruction; so that the form and purpose of each part is now almost a matter of conjecture, and the eye looks in vain for the hundred chambers, the *cento celle*, where the guards of this master of the world lodged.

On the elevation of Tivoli is the *Villa Estense*, built with royal magnificence, by Cardinal Hippolytus d'Este, about the year 1542. It belongs, at present, to the Duke of Modena. Here Ariosto is supposed to have composed the greater part of his poem. I visited this house with pleasure, and admired its noble situation, its long avenues, and its charming fountains, but I do not mean to give you a description of them. I have stopped too long at Tivoli; I must resume the road to *Sacro Speco*.

At Rome, I had agreed with a *vetturino*, who had a tolerably decent carriage, and three good horses, to take me to Subiaco. Judge of my surprise, when, as I was about to quit Tivoli, I saw another *vetturino* present himself, whose carriage was by no means equal to

that in which I had set out. I signified my dissatisfaction, which, doubtless, was unpalatable to my new driver. He told me, with an air of dignity—eyeing me askance—that he was surprised at my complaints; that his voiture, of which I made so little, was admired by all travellers; that it had just returned from Venice, whither it had brought a great French nobleman, *M. le Marquis de la France*, with all his family. As he pronounced the word “Marquis,” he looked at me with a very significant air. What could I answer? I yielded, and got into the coach tolerably crest-fallen. Scarcely had we been an hour on the road, when the weather changed, and the rain fell in torrents. I had fallen asleep, and on awakening saw, to my inexpressible annoyance, that my habit, which was snow-white when I got into the voiture, had a pretty deep tinge of green in some parts. The rain had entered through the half broken windows, and the green curtains, which were thoroughly wet, had caused the subject of my vexation. I immediately bade the driver stop, and remedy this inconvenience. He answered my reproaches by saying, that it was doubtless the children of *M. the Marquis of France*, who, in playing, had broken the window; and added, however, for my comfort, that a little washing would remedy the evil I complained of. I must needs be contented with this answer, although my habit was literally ruined, and I looked more like a dragoon than a Trappist.

It was late when we got to Subiaco. My coachman made me stop at an inn, where, he said, French and English foreigners of distinction put up. *M. le Marquis de la France* himself had stopped there, along with his charming family, for twenty-four hours. How could I resist such authorities? Had I the pencils of Callot and of Teniers, I would sketch this inn; but

being unpractised in the graphic art, I must content myself by saying, that the most wretched one of the poorest village in Estramadura is much better furnished. I heard the inn-keeper cry out to his maid: "Go get two-penny-worth of bread, a penny-worth of oil: do not forget the salt. Bring some macaroni." He was, however, an honest fellow.

In the meantime I sent a messenger to announce my arrival to the Superior of *Sacro Speco*, who had been already informed that I would come to pass some days in his monastery. He sent me word that, early on the following morning, a mule, a guide, and a person to carry my trunk, would be at my service. At six o'clock in the morning, I bade adieu to my hotel, and, mounted on the mule, traversed the town of Subiaco. My Trappist habit attracted unusual attention; almost every one saluted me. This small town is nothing but hills and hollows. It had rained during the night; and sometimes the streets were so steep, and the pavement so slippery, that I felt some fear. The animal which I bestrode was not very strong, but was remarkably sure-footed. My guide had tied a long rope round the neck, intending to draw him after him; but I told him that he was not a steamboat, neither was I a frigate, and that I had no need of being towed. He took the hint, and the poor beast enjoyed a few moments' liberty.

After we had trotted on for about a quarter of an hour, we came in sight of some hundred labourers, men and women, who were engaged in making a new road to *Sacro Speco*. When we came up to the place where the greater number of them were, some of them, concluding that the new road was not passable, pointed out a path, by which we might travel more conveniently. My guide immediately acquiesced, and put the rope on the mule's neck to tow me on. "Be attentive to me now," said he,

“and keep your eye steadily on me.” The path on which we now entered was not more than twenty inches broad; and was so steep, that although I leaned forward on the neck of my mule, I was apprehensive I should fall back. On the left I was sustained by a mountain, but on the right was a perpendicular precipice, more than forty feet deep. I saw at once the danger to which I exposed myself, and I would willingly have stopped, and got on the ground; but more than a hundred people were looking on, and my guide, dragging the mule after him, cried out with a firm voice, “Don’t fear!” Was I to be less courageous than him? I close my eyes and advance. The mule’s feet grazed the precipice. Suddenly the earth rolls down: the animal falls, and he and I remain suspended over the abyss—supported only by some roots, which the earth, in falling, had laid bare. To get out of my stirrups, and fling myself on the other side, was but the work of an instant; and I was felicitating myself on my escape, while my muleteer, without troubling himself about my fate, was deploring the misfortune of his mule, which, he said, had broken his leg. It was no such thing; both the mule and myself were safe and sound. The labourers, who had not lost sight of us, ran up eagerly. “Miracle! Miracle!” they all cried out: “O father, you owe your life to St. Benedict.” I admired the faith of these poor people. I thanked them for the interest they had manifested for me, and tranquilly resumed my route. When I was at a short distance from the crowd, who were endeavouring to drag up the mule, I sat down to look at the precipice, over which I had been for a moment suspended. I could not prevent a feeling of horror from stealing over me. Thus, said I to myself, but for your miraculous escape, your body would be now lying at the bottom of the abyss, a lifeless and disfigured mass; and your soul would have appeared

at the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge. Because you have escaped great dangers, and yet possess activity and strength, you flatter yourself with the hope of a long career. Do you not know that the Son of man will come at the hour he is least expected? Ah, if you let yourself be surprised, you shall be more severely judged than others, because you have said to them: "Eternity advances, and we think not of it." Think of it in time. Can you close your eyes on this new proof of God's providence? Yes, God has wished to rouse you from your tepidity. Awake! You walk daily on the verge of the eternal abyss.

Meanwhile I was reseated on my mule, and silently advanced. Although the road was broader, and no longer afforded cause for fear, the eye could see nothing but precipices and rocks: the silence of the place was only broken by the noise of the water, falling down into the valleys. I was much moved. I passed soon before a convent of Benedictines, called St. Scholastica, and after twenty minutes, we had crossed a small wood, and were before the gate of the monastery of Sacro Speco. The superior, Dom Luigi Marincola, received me with remarkable kindness. I was conducted to a fine apartment, where I found a good fire, as the morning was cold. Without stopping there, I went at once to the church, to thank God for having saved me from the danger to which I had so lately been exposed. From the church I passed to the grotto of St. Benedict, where his statue in white marble is to be seen.

The saint is represented of the age of about twenty-five years, and in the attitude of profound meditation. Afterwards I went to the rose-plot, where were once the thorns, in which, according to tradition, he rolled himself to overcome a temptation, and avoid a shameful fall. To tell you, dear Charles, all the salutary thoughts and

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profound reflections which the sight of this monastery, this grotto, and these thorns awakened in me, would be impossible, and, therefore, I will not even attempt it.

I have had then the happiness to see the cradle of an order to which I am proud to belong; of an order to which Europe owes its civilization; and which, during ages of ignorance, kept alive the sacred fire that afterwards blazed out on the world. Yes, my friend, had it not been for the sons of St. Benedict, Europe would perhaps be now plunged in barbarism; and Italy would have lost even the names of the great men of whom she is so justly proud. This was an immense benefit; and we enjoy it without reflecting that we owe it to a young man of noble family, who quitted at an early age the delights of Rome, took the religious habit, and retired to a cavern, to lead in it the life of the Antonies and the Hilarions. He had passed three years there without being known by any one, except by a neighbouring monk, who brought him food from time to time, when God, who destined him to shed a bright light on the west, permitted him to be discovered by some shepherds. From that moment an immense concourse visited his cavern. Many persons of the first rank cast themselves at his feet, to receive his benediction and implore his prayers. Others, touched by his discourse, and fortified by his example, embraced the austerities of penance, placed themselves under his direction, and wished to learn from him the ways of perfection. Some time afterwards, as the number of his disciples was daily on the increase, he was obliged to leave his solitude of Subiaco, and went to lay at Monte Cassino the first foundation of an order, which was to be for ever celebrated. In the order of St. Benedict, so simple in its development, do not you recognise that precious seed of which the Gospel speaks—that mustard seed, which, although so small as to be almost

imperceptible, grows until it becomes a great tree, on whose branches the birds of the air find shelter and repose? During his life, St. Benedict saw houses of his order established in various kingdoms. His rule, which is based principally on silence, prayer, and humility, was subsequently adopted by all the western monks.

You will one day come to Rome. When you have examined all that this city presents to the admiration of strangers, and thus satisfied your rational curiosity, make a pilgrimage to the monastery of *Sacro Speco*. It is a noble study for a painter; for a Christian, it is a sublime subject of meditation. There man enters, as if in spite of himself, into communion with God; he perceives the great Creator, who speaks to him: he only seeks nutriment from his word; he wishes for no other support, and his purified soul partakes of the delights of of paradise. Such are the sentiments with which this grotto inspired me. I am no longer astonished that a Benedict, a Bernard, and so many other great men, renounced the pleasures of the world, and sought in solitude tranquillity and peace. What astonishes me is, that the partizans of the world, who have been so often deceived, let themselves be still imposed upon. It is true, we dare not say to them: "Come and see how sweet retirement is." They have a horror of it, and fear to be found alone with themselves. For my own part, as I did not enter the port before I had been beaten by the tempest, and as I know by experience that the yoke of the Lord is more light than that of the princes of the earth, I regret the days formerly consecrated to the cares of life, or the pursuits of ambition. As I perceive daily more and more the advantages of the religious life, I bless our fathers for having perceived that we had a heart; and that it was necessary to open asylums where this heart,

which has been made for God, could consecrate itself entirely to His love.

I have passed the Easter time, as happy as one can be in this world, in the midst of a community, which, although small, brought to my mind, by the fervour and charity of its members, the palmy days of monastic life. The manner in which these religious chaunt the office is very edifying. They have always present to the mind the maxim of St. Bernard : " Let us recite the Divine office with such piety, that it may be always true to say, that our hearts pray in concert with our lips." They may say with the Psalmist : " I will sing thy praises, O God, in presence of thy holy angels." The silence which surrounds their monastery gives additional solemnity to their psalmody. They are never disturbed by the bustle of the busy world, who forget that they are in the vicinity of a church ; or by the unbecoming cries of the impious, who imagine that every thing but piety is permitted in the house of the Lord. When the mountain torrents, swollen by the tempest-rains, dash down with more than ordinary impetuosity, and the chainless winds beat against the windows of the church and cloister, their accents of prayer rise with more force, and harmonize with the voice of nature.

During Holy Week, I made the stations of the cross with these religious. The stations are established beside the grotto of St. Benedict, in a large stairway, called the *Scala Santa*, which leads to the rose-plot. Shall I describe to you those good fathers—walking slowly under these vaults, which are barely lighted by the pale glimmer of five lamps, that, day and night, burn before the image of our glorious founder. They stop and prostrate themselves ; they resume their march, and meditate on the different points of the Saviour's passion. They con-

jure Him by the prayers of His Mother, to apply to us the infinite merits of His sufferings. Nothing was better calculated to bring to my mind that sorrowful way, which I had actually gone over at Jerusalem. I seemed to behold Jesus pressed by the crowds of a lawless populace, and falling under the weight of the cross ; I followed in thought the pale, bleeding, and disfigured victim, and I wept. The last station was over. Jesus was lying in his sepulchre ; and we returned to the high altar, imploring God to impress on our hearts the recollection of the sufferings He had endured, when I heard the *Stabat Mater* sung by two voices with exquisite sensibility.

“ The Mother, at the foot of the cross, feels inexpressible anguish : her heart is transfixed with grief, when the Saviour expires.

“ Oh, let your ardent wishes transport you with me to the regions of infinity ! Let your inflamed soul see, feel, and comprehend the mystery. On the place where this cross was bathed in tears, rich flowers will bud forth. A new light will be diffused from it over the whole world.

“ What sufferings, O Mary, must have pierced thy soul ! Thou didst feel death as bitterly as thy Divine Son himself !

“ Angels of God, appear : let your pure voices be heard ! Did not you environ the cross of the Saviour, when it was lowered to the ground ? Let nothing but the mysterious motion of your wings disturb the harmony of your songs.

“ When the heart of the mother was immolated by the death of the Son, she endured, without any mitigation, the most bitter agonies of death. For where was her consolation ? Her soul, overpowered with grief, sent

forth to heaven a loud cry of sorrow: 'O Father, have pity on thy Son.'

"Who can refuse to weep with thee, O Mary, and sympathize with thy sufferings? Let the tears flow in abundance, let them escape in sighs, in lamentations and sobs. See how He, who is holy by excellence, is broken by humiliations, insults, the weight of sorrow, and the tortures of agony!

"But wherefore weep? Ah, holy tears, flow on joyfully, and let the Lord be blessed. Do not you hear a voice from above, saying: 'For thee have I suffered.' O Jesus, may my heart be nailed to thy cross. Its wounds shall be as sweet smelling flowers; and its aspirations as the incense which ascends to heaven.

"Glowing desires, divine joys, delightful tears, how you exalt my soul! Death shall not separate me from my sufferings. Jesus, and thou, Mary, assist me! Let thy sweet image become my buckler, in the combats in which I have to engage; and when my last hour approaches, may my soul be made worthy to be received into heaven, by the ardour of its love. Amen!"

The singing had ceased. I remained listening on my knees, my hands covering my face, in an ecstasy of delight.

How beautiful is the human voice! What instrument can be compared to it? Was it not designed to sing the praises of God, and is not melody a daughter of heaven? The solemn chaunt which we have at La Trappe is, doubtless, more analogous to the austerity of our rules. Like most other religious orders, we have not organ, or other musical instrument; but the canticles of the church, when sung by a good voice, are better calculated to reach the heart.

I have mentioned that twenty minutes before coming

to *Sacro Speco*, I passed by the convent called *Santa Scholastica*. St. Scholastica was the sister of St. Benedict, and history tell us that she lived in a monastery, which her brother built near his own. It is accordingly believed that this convent, which, for many ages, has been inhabited by Benedictine monks, was originally occupied by nuns of the same order. It is at present very rich, and is distinguished for its great alms, especially in calamitous times. From it issued the first books that appeared in Italy, after the invention of printing.

Although the subject which I have been treating is sufficiently serious, and the season forbids me to indulge in joyous feelings, I have not been able to suppress a laugh, and you will permit me to conclude by an amusing anecdote.

In my providential escape, the religious of *Sacro Speco* recognised the hand of God, and thought of erecting some memorial of the event, in the place where my life was so seriously endangered. There was an artist at Subiaco, whom they thought capable of carrying their design into execution. They sent for him; he came without waiting for a second invitation. When his arrival was announced I was in my room with some of the monks. The door was opened, and in came a man, who, by his appearance and manners, resembled one of those brigands of Calabria, that painters delight in sketching. We told him what we wanted, and had agreed on the price, when one of the fathers repeated what had befallen me, and dwelt with especial emphasis on my miraculous preservation. "I do not," said our new friend, with a solemn tone, "I do not see any miracle in the matter. The mule was heavy, and he," pointing me out with his finger, "was still heavier than the mule. It could not have happened otherwise." We could not suppress the laugh this drol-

lery excited. I laughed more heartily than the rest. I was, however, a little annoyed at my *embonpoint*, which had procured for me the advantage of the comparison.

The memorial was put up. It is a column, surmounted by a cross. On the pedestal, the religious have caused the words of the Psalmist to be inscribed: "In manibus portabunt te." "In their hands they shall bear thee up."

Adieu, dear friend. This letter is very long, but *Sacro Speco* is very agreeable. I shall not readily forget the excursion.

LETTER XXVIII.

Church of St. Sebastian—The Catacombs.

Rome, 18th of May, 1838.

I HAVE just returned from visiting the church of St. Sebastian, a little outside of Rome. This Saint was born at Narbonne, in France. He served in the army of Diocletian, and was even prefect of the prætorian guards, when the emperor, learning that he was a Christian, caused him to be transfixed with arrows, by archers, who left him, as they thought, dead on the public place. Two pious women came to bury him, but found him living. They removed him into their house, and, in a short time, all his wounds were healed.

The zeal of Sebastian for the propagation of the faith, was not diminished. Instead of concealing himself, as the Christians exhorted him, he one day ascended a flight of steps in the street, through which the emperor was to pass. When the latter drew nigh, Sebastian reproached him with his prejudices against the Chris-

tians, who made it a duty to pray for the prosperity of his government. Diocletian was astonished at this boldness: his surprise was increased when he recognized Sebastian, whom he had thought dead. He caused him to be arrested once more, and dragged to the circus, where he was put to death. His body was thrown into a common sewer.

The church of St. Sebastian has the title of a basilica. It was first built in 367 by Pope Damasus, two miles from Rome, on the side of the ancient Appian way, in the place where was the cemetery of St. Calixtus. Here were deposited the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul; and at a later period, the body of St. Sebastian was transferred here by the means of St. Lucina, a Roman lady.

This church was often restored by the Popes; it was entirely rebuilt in 1612, by Cardinal Scipio Borghese, who adorned it with a portico, sustained by six fine granite columns. The statue of the Saint is to be seen there; it is in white marble, and is the work of a disciple of Bernini. The Saint is represented in a recumbent posture, and dead.

A narrow and steep stairway leads from the church to the catacombs. These are said to be of many miles extent. They are a collection of galleries, which are hollowed out of the earth or sand, and are divided into many branches, which cross each other in all directions, and constitute a labyrinth, from which it would not be easy to disentangle one's self without an experienced guide. They are only three or four feet broad, and are ordinarily six or seven feet high.

At what epoch, and for what purpose were these galleries excavated? Opinions are divided. The most generally prevailing is, that they are the works of the early Christians, who retired there, in time of persecution, that they might celebrate the holy mysteries,

without the danger of being disturbed. But how could the early Christians have made such excavations? Would it have been possible for poor, weak and persecuted beings, to have accomplished such immense excavations?

It is then more probable that these subterranean dwellings were the work of the ancient Romans, who drew thence what has since been called "puzzolana," an excellent material for building, and of which the Romans made extensive use in the various buildings they erected in those times. The Christians found these holes already burrowed, and regarded them as a resource which Providence had prepared for them. They enlarged them, and there concealed themselves, and prayed together. There they buried their dead, that their sacred remains might not be confounded with those of the unbeliever. The catacombs were thus, at the same time, their asylum, their church, and their cemetery.

The extent and irregularity of the catacombs render a visit to them somewhat dangerous. Sometimes the entrances are suddenly closed up by the rolling down of the superincumbent earth, and thus many persons have been the victims of their curiosity. I was told of a Swedish gentleman and his lady, who went beyond the limits pointed out by their guide, and never more appeared; as also of some students, who contrived to elude the vigilance of their leader, and entered the catacombs, from which they never emerged. Some recent travellers involved themselves in the inextricable mazes of this labyrinth, where they would have perished, had they not fortunately heard the noise of some workmen, who happened to be employed there. What a slender hold on life has man! This anecdote recalls to my mind the episode, which concludes the fourth canto of the poem "De l'Imagination," which I here insert.

" Beneath Rome's ancient walls and wide-spread plains,
Lie caves profound and subterranean vaults,
Hollow'd by human hands : through many an age,
Thence came the masses rude that served to build
The stately palaces of Rome's proud sons :
Her noble monuments, her sacred shrines
Rose from the darkness of this vast abyss—
And here, from tyrants' scowl, from tyrants' chains
Secure, the church concealed her tender sons,
'Till that bright morn arose, when, from this dark
Abode, She came in beauty forth, and gave
Her sacred laws unto a subject world ;
Stamping the symbol of her faith upon
The imperial banners and the Cæsar's crown.

" A youthful lover of the heaven-born arts,
Himself belov'd by them—a parent's joy,
With curious ardour fired, long sought to gaze
Upon this dark abode of sainted men ;
This humble cradle of our ancient faith.
A thread to guide, a torch to light his steps,
In either hand he bears : he wanders on
In fearless boldness through a world of caves,
Which cross each other in perplexing maze.
He loves to gaze upon this lonely spot,
This cave of night, this city of the dead,
Spread out in silent majesty—to view
These mighty tombs veiled in eternal shade,
These shrines were Christ's first worshippers adored.
A small recess attracts his curious eye ;
Hope onward leads—and lo ! on every side,
Vases and sacred urns, and relics rare
Of virgins, martyrs, and departed saints,
Repay his search : he hastens on—alas !
Lost is the guiding thread that staid his steps.
His search is vain—alarm'd he wanders on—
He strays, returns, proceeds : redoubled fear
Now chills his soul and leads his trembling steps
Wherever terror points his dubious way.

" At length, while wand'ring through the devious routes,
The gloomy caverns of this vast abyss,
He finds a labyrinth vast, whence twenty paths
Diverge : which shall he choose to lead his steps

Back to the cheerful regions of the day ?
 He tries them all—returns, once more sets out,
 And fails.
 Fear bids him haste, fear bids him check his steps :
 He calls—the sullen echo terrifies his soul.
 Dark, troublous thoughts of death, of agony,
 Freeze the warm current of his youthful heart.

“ Already has the glorious orb of day
 Sped half his course—
 Scarce in three lustres does a human foot
 Traverse this spot—this dwelling-place of death.
 And now, with even wilder fears dismay'd
 Amid the rayless gloom around him spread,
 His flickering torch consumes apace : in vain
 With trembling step and palpitating heart,
 Now moving on, now motionless with awe,
 He strives to guard the dying flame : 'tis gone—
 Its glimm'ring light has led him to his tomb.
 A thousand spectres, horrible and vast,
 Rise on his madd'ning gaze—before him stalk :
 And death, dark form ! not as he comes amid
 The din of battle and the thunder's roar,
 Where glory's halo gilds the warrior's grave—
 But death, hideous and slow—and leading on,
 In his clenched hands Famine and wild Despair.
 Chilled by the agony of fear within,
 His blood flows not—his throbbing heart is still.
 And oh ! what sadd'ning thoughts now fill his soul
 Of parents, friends, he ne'er will meet again :
 Of noble projects blighted in the bud,
 And toils which were to eternize his name,
 Bestowing bliss e'en while they promised fame :—
 And she whose love—whose smile was unto him
 The guerdon of his toils, his sweetest praise,
 How stream'd his tears as on his aching sight
 Her long-lov'd image rose !

“ And yet he hopes—
 A ray of light, he thinks, has crossed the gloom ;
 He hears a voice—'tis hush'd—he lists again—
 Alas ! through this vast city of the dead,
 Silence and darkness are his only friends.
 His horrid fate now rushes on his soul,
 His heart tumultuous heaves with countless woes :

He rises, falls, again he strives to rise,
As o'er the crumbling bones and shatter'd tombs
Of men long dead he fearful gropes his way,
Uncertain whither lead his darkling steps;
When lo! his trembling hand has seized the thread,
The friendly guide he thought was lost fore'er.
With gratitude and joy he clasps the prize,
Clings to it—kisses it with rapturous bliss,
And follows it in hopes once more to gaze
On day's celestial face. And yet his steps
Still linger in this solitude of death;
From danger freed his still unquiet heart
Would feast upon the horrors of the place,
The perils he has past; and note them all.
Now quick as lightning from the low'ring cloud
He flies from this abode of fear and death.
Oh! who can tell the rapture of his soul,
As once again unto the azure heav'ns
He lifts his grateful sight.

“ O'er the blue vault,

One vast expanse of purity and light,
His eye now revels: city, hamlet, cot,
The verdant fields, the forest's deeper green,
Burst in new beauty on his ravish'd sight.
Thrilling with deep and overflowing joy,
His heart is full, as though he saw the day,
When, at a word, this vast creation came
In faultless beauty from its Maker's hand.”

In the notes subjoined to this poem, it is stated that this adventure, which we might be inclined to regard as fictitious, actually occurred to a student of the French Academy. Be that as it may, similar accidents have caused many of the galleries to be closed, at a short distance from their entrances. There is, however, enough left open to satisfy the curiosity of travellers, as to the form and arrangement of the tombs.

Those who are not afraid to enter behold on either side horizontal cavities, of the length and breadth of the human body. Sometimes there are three, four, and even

five bodies, one over the other. When these were placed there, its entrance was closed up with bricks and mortar. The most of these cavities are now empty, because the remains of many celebrated martyrs have been transferred from the catacombs. There, are, however, still many bodies tolerably preserved; and hence are taken the precious relics which the Pope grants to the churches of Catholic countries. This is not done as Protestants pretend. According to them, a body found in the catacombs is taken at hazard, gets a name, and is at once dubbed a martyr. This calumny is without foundation. It is, indeed, true that the catacombs were the cemetery of the first Christians; but we do not say that all the first Christians were saints. The greatest precautions are taken at Rome to avoid mistakes in this matter; and those charged with the investigation give a decent burial to doubtful relics, rather than distribute them to the faithful.

In the cavities are ordinarily found, near the bodies, a sepulchral lamp, and a vase, called a lachrymatory urn. This vessel is of baked earth, or of glass. If it preserves a red tinge, and a sediment be found at the bottom of it, there is every reason to conclude that the body is of a martyr. Philosophers, interested in weakening the force of this proof, have asserted that this sediment was the deposit of the wine, which the Christians kept by them for the participation of the holy Eucharist; but the judicious Leibnitz, after many chemical experiments made on the subject, has demonstrated that it could only be a crust of congealed blood, which retained its colour after many ages. It is known with what devotion the Christians collected the blood of their brethren; they gathered up the most minute drops; and hence it is that we sometimes find, in the vases, a sponge, or piece of linen, tinged with blood.

On the brick work, which closed up the mouth of the cavity, is generally represented some symbol, as a flower, a palm, an oak branch. The flower typified virginity; the palm, martyrdom; the oak branch, force and constancy. These symbols, although of undoubted character, do not, however, when alone, suffice to designate martyrdom or sanctity. But if, in the same cavity, is found a vial, stained with blood, they derive from this connection a new force, and there is no longer any doubt of the authenticity of the relics. This is the rule which the congregation of Indulgences marked out in 1668, and the terms in which it is announced show that the matter was not lightly treated.*

In the tombs, inscriptions relative to the resurrection, and other mysteries of faith, are frequently met with; but it is rare to find names with dates, or other signs capable of satisfying the curious. I am not surprised at it. The martyrs thought not of posterity: it was enough for them that their names were written in the book of life, and as they left all for God, they sought no other recompense than Him. There are, then, relics of unknown saints; but these relics, even when distinguished by undoubted signs, are not put in the same class with the others. The church does not permit the saints, whose relics these are, to be honoured by a special office.

I have told you that the catacombs served no less as oratories than as cemeteries for the first Christians. Thither they retired to pray, and it cannot be a matter of indifference to us to be acquainted with the place

*Cum de notis disceptaretur ex quibus veræ sanctorum reliquiæ a falsis et dubiis dignosci possint, sancta congregatio, re diligentius examinata, censuit palmam et vas illorum sanguine tinctum pro signis certissimis habenda esse: aliorum vero signorum examen in aliud tempus rejecit.—*Dat. Romæ, die 10 Aprilis, 1668.*

where they were wont to assist at the celebration of the holy mysteries.

On entering these catacombs, you pass through a circular hall, tolerably large, in the midst of which rises a stone altar. Round the hall are seats cut in the rock, on which the faithful sat during the assemblies. Thither would repair, before the dawn of day, a venerable Pontiff, who had, perhaps, escaped the executioner's sword; and whose body was not only attenuated by austerity, but bore on it the marks of the torments he had endured for the faith. He read for his brethren the Holy Scriptures, explained the Gospel for them, and failed not to add some exhortation, adapted to their circumstances. Instructed and encouraged by his words, the assembly rose, and, turning towards the east, prayed for all mankind, not even excepting those who actually persecuted them.

Then were presented the gifts, that is, the bread and wine, which were to be the matter of the sacrament. The priest received these gifts from the hands of the faithful, and offered them to God in their name. When this offering was finished, the holy sacrifice began, and after the Pontiff had received the communion, he administered it to his flock, by the hands of the deacons.

How often, alas! were these holy ceremonies interrupted by the arrival of some Christians, who bore into the midst of the assembly the lifeless bodies of their brethren, which they had rescued from the beasts! No sighs were heard — no tears flowed: the prayers were continued with greater earnestness, for they had now an additional intercessor with God. What were their feelings when hostile sounds resounded through these vaulted retreats?—We must remember that the Christians of the first ages were the objects of the public hatred: they were accused of being the enemies of the human race.

Prejudice transformed their very virtues into crimes, and whatever precautions they took, they were too numerous not to be easily discovered.

In such alarming circumstances, my friends, children and women might fly; but you would hear the men encouraging each other, by saying: "Why should we fear? Have we forgotten the promises which Jesus Christ made to his church? A great tempest has arisen: but he will say to the sea, 'be calm,' and soon a great calm will ensue."

There are other catacombs at Rome, and in the environs, but those of St. Sebastian are the largest and most celebrated. Historians reckon seventeen Popes, and one hundred and seventy-four thousand martyrs, who were buried there. All these monuments are, however, curious: all are equally respectable, because they bring to our minds the birth of the church, and the constancy of the ancient heroes of the faith.

On regaining the road that leads to Rome, I discovered the beautiful mausoleum of Cecilia Metella, the wife of Crassus, and daughter of Quintus Metellus, the Cretan. Time, the barbarians, and the civil wars of the middle ages, have happily respected the greater part of this monument, which reaches back to the latter days of the republic. On a large square base, rises a round tower of ninety feet diameter, which is coated with Tiburtine stones, united with so much art, that the junctures are not easily perceived. Above is a cornice, with a frieze, adorned with ox heads and garlands. This decoration procured for the tower the name of *Capo di Bove*. Lower down, on the side turned to the road, the following inscription is read:

CAECILIAE
I. CRETICI F.
METELLE CRASSI.

“How many blunders we would be spared,” said an intelligent traveller, on reading this, “if all the inscriptions on monuments were as simple as this one !”

Eudorus, in “The Martyrs,” relates, that having wished to regain the Appian way, at the beginning of night, he made for the tomb of Cecilia Metella, and soon found himself unawares among the catacombs. These catacombs were consequently those of St. Sebastian. If you wish for a new description of them, drawn by the hand of a great master, listen to the language which M. de Chateaubriand puts in the mouth of Eudorus :

“I had gone to visit the Fountain Egeria ; night overtook me ; in regaining the Appian way, I directed my footsteps towards the tomb of Cecilia Metella, a masterpiece of elegance and grandeur. As I passed through the desert plains, I perceived many persons gliding by in the shade ; they seemed to stop at the same point and suddenly disappear. Impelled by curiosity I advanced, and boldly entered the cavern, where these mysterious phantoms had descended. I saw stretched out before me subterranean galleries, which were scantily illumined by some lamps, suspended at intervals from the vaulted ceiling. The walls of these funereal corridors were bordered by a triple range of coffins, placed one above the other. The melancholy glare of the lamps, reflected on these plastered vaults, as it slowly moved along these sepulchres, shed a terrific mobility over those eternally immovable objects. It was to no purpose that I listened attentively, and sought to catch some guiding sound in this abyss of silence. I heard nothing but the beating of my heart, in the solemn stillness of the place. I attempted to return ; it was no longer possible. I took a false route, and instead of escaping from the labyrinth, I involved myself in it. New avenues, which opened on me, and crossed each other in various directions, aug-

mented my perplexity. The more I endeavoured to regain the path by which I entered, the more I lost myself. At one time I advanced with slowness, at another time with rapidity ; and by the echo of my own steps, I imagined that some one was walking quickly after me.

“ For a long time was I thus involved : my strength began to fail, and I sat down on a solitary cross-way in this city of the dead. I was looking with alarm on the lamps which were nearly burned out, when suddenly a harmony, like that of celestial spirits on high, ascends from the depths of these sepulchral mazes. These heavenly accents by turns died away, and by turns were repeated. They seemed to acquire additional sweetness, in their wanderings through these tortuous subterraneous passages. I rose and advanced towards the place, whence issued these magic sounds, and suddenly found myself in an illuminated hall. On a tomb, decked out with flowers, Marcellinus was celebrating the Christian mysteries. Young girls, covered with white veils, were singing at the foot of the altar ; a numerous assembly assisted at the sacrifice. I was in the catacombs !

“ While I was indulging in my reflections, a deacon leaned over and whispered something in the Pontiff’s ear. He made a sign. Instantly the singing ceased ; the lamps were extinguished. Borne along by the pious crowd, I found myself at the entrance of the catacombs.”

This quotation from M. de Chateaubriand condemns me to silence. Adieu then, dear Charles.

LETTER XXIX.

Father Francesco Della Grotta, former guardian of the Holy Sepulchre
—Assassination of many religious of the Holy Land by the Greeks—
Pestilence at Jerusalem—College of the Propaganda—Young man of
Bethlehem.

Rome, 27th of May, 1838.

I WAS going, some days since, to the capitol, when I observed coming towards me a Franciscan friar, whose venerable features were not unknown to me. I advanced in his direction, and immediately recognised, albeit the absence of the long beard he wore when I first saw him, the Reverend Father Francesco Della Grotta, the worthy guardian of the Holy Sepulchre, who received me with so much kindness, when I made my pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He had finished the time of his residence in the Holy Land, and had returned to live, as a simple religious, in his original monastery. I at once cordially embraced him ; and in my eagerness put him a thousand questions, without giving him time to answer any.

My surprise was great when I saw his eyes fill with tears, as I asked about many of my old friends. After a moment's silence, he invited me to accompany him to his monastery, which was nigh. When I got into his cell, the poverty of which reminded me of that I had occupied at Jerusalem, he said to me, and deep-drawn sighs often interrupted his words: " Those of whom you inquire, and who were so worthy of your regard, have been assassinated." " How !" cried I ; " assassinated ! Doubtless by the Arabs ?" " No ; by the Greeks. Attend to me for a moment."

“ About the middle of July, 1833, six Spanish friars, two priests, Father Isidore Banals, Procurator-General of the Holy Land, and Father Zaccharia Bettarnero ; and four lay brothers, Alexander Gomez, Mathias Ciprian, Paul Gonzalez and Francis Artiq, together with two young Catholics, Benedict Gallard, brother of the dragoman of the Superior of the Holy Land, and the son of the Vice-Consul of Jaffa, embarked for Alexandria, intending to pass thence to Spain. The ship, which had a cargo of wood, belonged to a Turk, who had also received four Turks and two Jews as passengers. The crew, moreover, consisted of three Turks and seven Greek schismatics. Scarcely was the anchor taken in, and the sails spread out, when the helmsman steered for Cyprus, instead of making for Alexandria. He was asked why he took this route ; and he answered, that he wished to take in water at Cimarola in Cyprus. Some days after, when we were near the island, the seven Greeks profited by the moment when all were sleeping, went on deck, and poniarded the captain, the officer who had care of the strangers, four religious, the two young Catholics, the four Turkish passengers and the two Jewish merchants. They did not even spare the two Turkish sailors, whom they left apparently dead. These were, however, only wounded, and remained concealed under the planks. The Greeks spared only the two religious, and promised to save them, if they discovered where was the money. On their refusal, they broke open the chests and trunks, and made a hole in the vessel, with the view of sinking it. Abandoning it, they threw themselves into the boat, and brought with them the two religious, whom they immediately afterwards massacred.

“ The two Turks, who, from beneath the planks, observed as much as possible the motions of their assassins, no sooner saw them disappear, than they endeavoured

to stop up the hole, and made for the port of Larnaca, where they fortunately arrived the following day. The less wounded of the two went on shore, and recounted the horrible event. No sooner was the French consul informed of it, than he sent his secretary on board, to examine the other Turk, who was unable to quit the ship, and who by his deposition confirmed what the first had related.

“The relation of this horrible affair was immediately transmitted to our Procurator-General at Jerusalem, as well as to myself, who was then within six leagues of Antioch, on the road to Aleppo, whither I was going on my visitation. I made two copies of it, one of which I sent to the Father Commissary of the Holy Land at Constantinople, that he might communicate it without delay to the French ambassador, the other I retained.

“This outrage did not remain long unpunished. The assassins were taken soon after in a small isle, near Cyprus. Three were condemned and executed on the spot; the other four were brought to Constantinople to be put to the galleys. They confessed that they had cast the two religious into the sea. And, indeed, a European vessel met the corpse of one of them not far from Cyprus.”

This recital was followed by another almost equally mournful. The good father told me, that a short time after my departure, the pestilence had carried off the greater number of the religious of St. Saviour. I dropped a few tears over their memory, although I envied their lot. To die at Jerusalem, at some steps from Calvary, near the tomb of the Saviour of the world, and to die the victim of charity! What a death! What a resurrection will follow!

I remained long with this ancient guardian of the Holy Sepulchre: his presence brought to my mind all that I

had seen in the Holy City, and renewed all the impressions I had received there. On my return to the convent in which I reside, I cast myself before my crucifix, and there, with sentiments of lively compunction, repeated what I had so often said, but what I had not sufficiently acted on: "What am I, compared with these fervent religious? To forget myself—to offer myself a willing sacrifice for Thee, who hast sacrificed thyself willingly for me—shall hereafter be, O my God, my only care, my only happiness. Would that those unhappy days, which I have spent without serving thee, were not numbered in my life! No, I cannot rejoice at them: I will say to thee unceasingly, like the penitent Augustin, *Sero te amavi*. 'Too late have I loved thee.' But now I love and will love thee; and by the ardour of my love compensate for the time I have spent without loving thee. And thou, O holy and venerable cross, the moment advances when all will escape me. Thou wilt, however, remain, and wilt be my only hope. Thou wilt be placed in my palsied hands: thou wilt be presented to my darkening eyes: thou wilt be applied to my pale-coloured lips. May I before have learned to bear thee. It is by sufferings that Christ has entered into his glory. If I hope one day to partakè of it, I must be here a partner in his sufferings."

No later than yesterday, I had another reminiscence of the Holy Land. I went to pay a last visit to the College of the Propaganda, where, as you already know, a large number of youths are assembled from various parts of the world, who, after having drunk at the fountain of ecclesiastical science, return to their country and aid in the maintenance and propagation of the faith. The superior of this house is a Jesuit, no less respectable for his varied information than solid virtues: he received me with the politeness which characterises the members of

that society, and after speaking to me of my pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he told me that he had among his disciples a young man from Bethlehem, who was preparing to receive holy orders. I remarked, that I might possibly know him; and he was immediately called. Notwithstanding the long interval of time, I at once recognised in this youth, an Arab Catholic, named Abdalha Comindari, whom I had often seen at Bethlehem, in the sacristy of the church, and in the house of his brother, who was a famous bead-merchant. The superior asked him if he knew me. He looked at me for some time, and answered, "No." I was not surprised. At Jerusalem I wore a thick beard, and over my Trappist habit I carried a black scapular. He still continued to eye me: when suddenly, as if awaking from a deep sleep, he joined his hands, and with a joyful voice exclaimed: "Ah, I recollect him: it is the good pilgrim, who, before he quitted Bethlehem, anointed with rose-oil the crib of the infant Jesus, and embalmed the place of his nativity." "Yes, my friend," said I, as I pressed him to my heart, which beat with joy at the recollection of the place of the nativity—at the mere mention of the crib of the infant Jesus.

Adieu, dear Charles, such moments make one forget much suffering.

LETTER XXX.

Departure from Rome.

Rome, 1st of June, 1838.

WHAT has religion to expect or apprehend from the present state of the public mind in Europe? Such is, dear Charles, the subject I wished to examine in my first letter; but, as is truly said, man proposes, but God disposes. While I was occupied with this question, and consulting the most enlightened prelates before I would attempt to answer it, I was honoured by the Holy Father with a bull, by which I am made Abbot of La Trappe. This nomination obliges me to go immediately to France, and I only remain here until I shall have made preparation for my journey, and taken leave of His Holiness. Thus, my friend, in two or three days, at the farthest, I will go and kiss the feet of that venerable Pontiff, who has received me with such kindness, and given me such distinguished marks of his favour. When I shall have received his benediction, I will repair to the church of St. Peter, and there, prostrate before the tombs of the apostles, I will ask of the Lord, through their intercession, strength to sustain the weighty burden imposed on me.

What a change! I hoped to be able to return soon to the obscurity of the cloister, and I am obliged to choose a residence in the midst of Rome; for the capital of the Christian world is to be my future residence, as I have been named Procurator-General of the Order. It is thence that I will correspond with its different houses; and, each year, I will leave it to assist at the general

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chapter, which is holden, generally, at La Grande Trappe, near Mortagne, in the month of September. In place, then, of passing the rest of my days, as I had promised myself, in meditating on the eternal truths, I will have to occupy myself with the concerns of my brethren.

Where is the time which I passed in my cell, forgetting the world, and forgotten by it, and occupied in the humblest duties? And yet I was happy in this abjection, and I would not have exchanged my lot for that of princes of the earth. I was then unembarrassed by any other care; I sought but the one thing necessary, and only sighed after eternal happiness. Meditation had taught me that, besides this, all was vanity and affliction of spirit; and when a happy experience had rendered this truth more sensible to me—when my advanced age and declining strength warned me of approaching death, I am now, as it were, driven from the port, where, after so many storms I had found happiness and peace.—No matter: I will obey, as I know, moreover, that God conducts us sometimes to himself by extraordinary ways, and, as I am convinced that all his designs on me are designs of mercy. Pray for me, dear Charles, cease not to pray for me. Never did I stand so much in need of your prayers; for the dignity to which I am raised, instead of diminishing the obligations I had imposed on myself, considerably augments them, by the new duties it involves. To unite all these duties with the observance of the rule which I have embraced, I will live as much as possible as a Trappist; I will only appear in my religious habit, and will endeavour to form a solitude in my heart. The cross that I bear at my breast will not be a mere ornament; having it always before my eyes, I will consider myself more closely united with my Saviour, and will animate myself

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NO. II.—SYNOPT

Actual destination.	Number
Suffering from fevers, ic ic disorders.	16
suffering from fever- tonic, and consumis-	5
exes; wounds, and ical cases.	3
es; wounds and fr.	1
men.	2
es; leprosy, and outa- ses.	2
ersons of both sexe	4
and convalesceboth	48
ical diseases.	7
ecaries.	4
and sick persons Lom-	1
and sick person Po-	6
ines.	6
s from Lucca.	4
grim German	4
grim Portugu	4
from Bergan	4
of both sex	at ho
ids of both #.	at ho
at of those & dead in , and for relief of souls.	

ed. *Theader, of coun*

is four hurd; in the year of

	Name of
For old men, and orphans of both sexes.	1 Pia Casa, for fou in Sassia.
	2 Pia Casa of orp.
	3 Ospizio Aposto.
	4 Ospizio di Tata
	5 Casa d'Industria
	6 Ospizio di S. M
Houses of refuge for poor per- sons.	7 Ospizio Ecclesia
	8 Ospizio di S. Ga
	9 Ospizio di S. L
Asylums for female orphans.	10 Conservatorio d
	11 Conservatorio d nari.
	12 Conservatorio d
	13 Conservatorio d
	14 Conservatorio c denza e S. Pa
	15 Conservatorio c fugio.
	16 Conservatorio c Crescentino.
	17 Conservatorio P
	18 Conservatorio d which is uni phemia.
	19 Conservatorio I
	20 Conservatorio d
	21 Conservatorio d
Asylum for female peni- tents.	22 Pia Casa for wic
	23 Ritiro della Cro
	24 Rifugio di S. M
	25 Rifugio della L

INSTITENTS, AND WIDOWS, IN ROME.

ICAL TABLE

Institution.	n.	Total number.	Revenues,		Observations.
			from their foundation.	from the state.	
he Institution.	he Con-		Crowns.	Crowns.	
ndlings, in S. Spi	rvatorio.	2073.20	50000	.	
		38	14500	.	—Sixteen more chil-
				.	dren pay.
hans.		570	50000	.	—140 more persons pay.
lico di S. Mich		100	1600	2760	—Twelve more children
					pay.
Giovanni.		6	.	.	
del' Can. Man,		900	4000	35000	
aria degli Ang		10	1000	.	—This institution is in
		224	.	.	the hands of the
astico.			.	.	Knights of Malta,
alla.		30	.	.	who have restored
		24	.	2000	it to its original
uigi.					destination.
elle Neofite.		8	3290	310	
i S. Caterina		12	.	.	
'SS. Quattro		90	789	4512	
elle Mendic,		100	3399	3111	
ella Divini		25	1500		
squale.					
li S. Maria		63	900	2623	
li SS. Cle		50	2400	1363	
		10	.	1758	
io.		30	3500	574	
elle Trinit		40	2000	.	
ted that					
		50	645	3385	
Borromeo.					
elle Peric		40	2000	.	
ell' Addo					
lows.		20	360	1200	
ce.		14	200	800	
aria in		14	1000	.	
auretan					

In these asylums, besides the numbers here given, are about 120 children who are paid for.

ARY INSTITU

Actual destination.

out money at a small r	
st to needy persons.	1
employment to poor men	
to work.	
outes alms to the poor	
es, as also on the great sol	2
he year.	3
a fixed allowance to the i	
also a loan on extraordin	4
ent occasions.	
alms, as also alms on t	5
mnities.	6
is assistance to reduced	
families.	7
ame as No. 6.	8
is aid to poor Roman cler	9
ts.	
is aid to poor and industriou	
is aid to young and virtuous	10
is aid to poor clerics and p	
ies to poor girls.	11
ame.	
ame.	
ies to young women of Anc	
me.	12
ies to poor girls.	
ame.	13
ame.	
ame.	14
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ame.	15
ame.	
ame.	16
ame.	
ame.	17
uitous defence of poor suitors	
ds aid to the imprisoned and	
or suitors.	
ame.	
sts those who are condem	
ath.	

UCTION, IN ROME.

Scholars.		Total.	Masters.	Revenues,	
Male.	Female.			from private property.	from the state.
2115	..	2115	102	..	328
245	..	385	3
140	..		2		
200	..	310	3		
110	..		2		120
350	..		4	..	
420	..	1290	4	..	450
520	..		6	1200	
40	30	70	2	180	
64	..	64	1	130	
70	..		3	120	
		140			
70	..		3	144	
395	230	625	15	..	1170
..	160		
..	1600	6400	80		120
70	..	500	3		1320
..	430		19	..	
S ..	300				
		600	11	..	900
			11	..	
S ..	300		19		..
..	1000	1150	5	1008	..
..	150				
S ..	30	30	6
Sc ..	70	70	4
Sc ..	80	80	4	..	
ic ..	70	70	4	1000	..
ic ..	100		3		
		200		..	
..	100		3		

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unceasingly to follow his footsteps. To strengthen myself, I perceive that I stand in need of particular graces: redouble, then, your prayers, my good friend. And thou, reader, to whom I have so often imparted the secrets of friendship, pray, also, for me, that as a worthy son of St. Bernard, I may be of some use to his order, and merit, thereby, to re-enter the cloister, there to die, as becomes a penitent, in the midst of my brethren.

Adieu.

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APPENDIX.

THE following tables are taken from an historical and statistical essay on the charitable institutions of Rome, published a few years since by Monsignore Morichini, vice-president of the Ospizio of S. Michael,* mentioned by our traveller in his remarks on that institution. It has been thought they will form an appropriate Appendix to the "Journey from La Trappe to Rome," and an ample justification of the praises bestowed by the worthy Trappist on the benevolence and charity of the eternal city.

* *Degli Istituti di pubblica carità e d'istruzione primaria in Roma. Saggio storico e statistico di Monsig. D. Carlo Luigi Morichini, Romano, Vice Presidente dell'Ospizio Apostolico di S. Michele—Roma, 1835.*

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